

THE three ABANDONED PRAYERS

SALAAT-UL-ISTIKHAARAH
& ITS RULINGS

SALAAT-UT-TAUBAH
& ITS CONDITIONS

SALAAT-UT-TASREEH
& ITS ESTABLISHMENT



SHAYKH 'ADNAAN AALI 'UROOR

© 2004/429 Harraf & Harraf

All Rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without written permission of the copyright owner.

Cover Design
Harraf & Harraf

Published by
Harraf & Harraf

Printed & Bound by
Imprints
London, England, UK
020 8938 6111

Publisher's Note

All praise belongs to Allaah, Lord of the Worlds. Peace and blessing of Allaah be upon Muhammad, his family, his companions and all those who follow him till the Last Day.

Before you Muslim brothers and sisters is the translation of a valuable book regarding three prayers that the Muslims have abandoned or purely neglected. This neglect of the basics of the Religion of Islaam has led to the degradation and humiliation that we find ourselves in. The cure for which is to return to the way of the Qur'aan and the Prophetic *Sunnah* in all the affairs of our lives. Thus Harraf & Harraf are endeavouring to make available in the English language treatise that show the Muslims the rules and guidelines for the fundamentals of the Religion and provide them an ideal way to become Muslims that are enlightened about their religion so that they can finally truly return to Islaam.

The lengthy discussion on the authentication of the numerous *hadeeth*, conducted by the author have been omitted in an attempt to keep the translation simple and pertinent. Since the aim of the book, the publishers and the translators is only to encourage the Muslim back to their religion and to the revival of these three great prayers.

Finally we ask Allaah to help us in our endeavours and to grant reward to the author, its translator and all those who read this book. And our final call is that all praise belongs to Allaah and peace and blessing be upon the final Messenger, Muhammad (ﷺ).

Harraf & Harraf

Contents

Introduction.....	9
<i>The First Prayer</i>	
Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah	12
How Does The Servant Seek The Guidance Of His Lord?....	14
Does Anything Prevent The Supplication From Being Answered?.....	17
Actions Which Prevent The <i>Du'aa</i> Of <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> From Being Answered.....	18
What Are The Means By Which A Servant Can Cause His <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> To Be Accepted.....	24
An Example Of How The Supplication Should Be Made.....	29
What Is The Proof for This?.....	31
What Does <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Mean?.....	33
An Explanation Of The Meanings Of This Great <i>Du'aa</i>	34
What Are The Affairs In Which One Makes <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> ? Can <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Be Made In Those Affairs Whose Result Is Known?.....	39
What Is The Benefit And Wisdom Of <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> ?.....	42
What Should A Servant Do After He Makes <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> ?.....	44
What Is The Importance Of Dreams And Their Like?.....	48
Is It Permissible To Repeat <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> More Than Once For A Particular Matter?.....	51
Does <i>Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah</i> Have A Particular Or Favoured time?.....	53
Is It Permissible To Perform <i>Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah</i> In The Prohibited Times Of <i>Salaah</i> And What Are Those Times?...	58
Is There A Particular Time <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Should Be Made Before Undertaking The Affair?.....	61
Is There Any <i>Du'aa</i> Which One Makes After Being Granted That Which He Has Asked For?.....	63
	64

Does One Recite A Particular <i>Soorah</i> In <i>Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah</i> ?	65
When Is The <i>Du'aa</i> For <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Read, Before Or After The <i>Salaam</i> ?.....	66
If One Forgets To Make The <i>Du'aa</i> For <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> After Performing The <i>Salaah</i> , What Should He Do?.....	67
Can <i>Du'aa Al-Istikhaarah</i> Be Made After An Obligatory <i>Salaah</i> ?.....	68
Can <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Be Made After A <i>Sunnah Salaah</i> Or A <i>Salaah</i> Performed Due To An External Reason?.....	69
If A Servant Starts A <i>Salaah</i> Or Finishes A <i>Salaah</i> Then Remembers He Has To Make <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> , Can He Consider It To Be <i>Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah</i> ?.....	71
Can One Make <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> By The <i>Du'aa</i> Without Performing <i>Salaah</i> ?.....	73
Is It Necessary To Adhere To The Exact Text Of The <i>Du'aa</i> ?.....	75
Can One Prompt The <i>Du'aa</i> For One Who Has Not Memorised It Or Can It Be Read From A Book?.....	77
What Is The Ruling Of <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> ?.....	79
Should One Raise One's Hands Whilst Making <i>Du'aa</i> For <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> ?.....	79
Does One Say Anything Before The <i>Du'aa Al-Istikhaarah</i> Or After It From The Praise Of Allaah And Peace And Blessings Upon The Prophet?.....	80
Can <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Be Made For Two Affairs Performing One <i>Salaah</i> And One <i>Du'aa</i> ?	81
If The Heart Inclines Towards Something Before <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> , Does The Individual Make <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> For This Affair And What Is The Benefit Of <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> In This Case?.....	82
Is The One Making <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> Answered Of Assurety?..	83
Is It Possible For The One Making <i>Al-Istikhaarah</i> To Know Whether He Is Granted His Request Or Not?.....	84

Does The One Making <i>Al-Istikbaarah</i> Also Seek Advice From Someone, And When? And What Is The Benefit Of Seeking Council Of People (<i>Istishaarah</i>) With Seeking The Guidance Of Allaah (<i>Al-Istikbaarah</i>)?.....	91
Are There Any Other Ways Of Making <i>Al-Istikbaarah</i> Other Than What Has Been Mentioned?.....	94
Is It Permissible To Make <i>Al-Istikbaarah</i> For Somebody Else?.....	99
Clarification Of Some Of The <i>Abaadeeth</i> Concerning <i>Al-Istikbaarah</i>	100
Summary.....	103
<i>The Second Prayer</i>	
Salaat-ut-Taubah	106
The Conditions Of Repentance.....	116
Three Things Which The Repentant Servant Must Do And Three Which He Must Be Aware Of.....	118
How Is <i>Salaat-ut-Taubah</i> Performed?.....	122
<i>The Third Prayer</i>	
Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh	128
<i>Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh</i> And The Saying Of Some Scholars Regarding It.....	128
How The <i>Salaah</i> Is Performed.....	131
Rulings Concerning <i>Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh</i>	134
The Excellence Of <i>Dhikr</i> (Remembrance Of Allaah) And <i>Tasbeeh</i> Aside From <i>Salaah</i>	135
Its Proof (Of Authenticity).....	138
Glossary.....	142



INTRODUCTION

All praise is due to Allaah, who has legislated for His servants that which benefits them in their *Deen* (religion), their worldly affairs and in their Hereafter, and peace and blessings be upon the teacher of good to mankind, their guide to the path of righteousness. Verily he did not leave an affair that would draw them closer to Allaah except that he guided them towards it, nor an affair that would distance them from Allaah except that he warned them regarding it.

So, that which is between your hands, my Muslim brother, is an explanation of three great blessed prayers, which have been abandoned by the Muslims, except for those whom Allaah has shown mercy towards.

As for the first, then it is *Salaat-ul-Istikbaarah* (the Prayer for Seeking Guidance) in which the servant seeks guidance from his Lord and seeks the counsel of his Creator and by it the servant actualises his servitude to Allaah – the Most High, and it is built upon the truthfulness of his certainty and his assurance in his Lord.

So, what a spiritually immense prayer it is, endowing the Muslim with tranquillity and restfulness, increasing his *eemaan* (faith) with *eemaan*, by the penetrating power of Allaah, and His powerful Will, not to speak of it bestowing constancy, satisfaction and submission to the Decree of *Al-Jabbaar* (The Compeller). So how great a prayer it is, and how splendid a worship it is.

As for the second, then it is *Salaat-ut-Tawbah* (the Prayer of Repentance) by which Allaah wipes away the mistakes and expiates the sins; and who from amongst us does not sin, and who from amongst us does not make mistakes?

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) spoke the truth,

"Every son of Aadam makes mistakes and the best of those who make mistakes are those who constantly repent."¹

So by this blessed prayer true servitude to Allaah – the Most High – becomes apparent, as does the servant's *eemaan* in his Lord and recognition that his destination is in His Hands, how perfect He is, free of all defects and deficiencies.² By it the servant manifests his fear of his Lord's punishment and his desire for His Forgiveness and Paradise.

So if this prayer consisted of only a manifestation of humility, an acknowledgement of sins and repentance to the Lord, then sufficient it would be, having immense goodness and huge benefits. Therefore race towards it, O slave of Allaah, and be amongst the truly successful ones, if Allaah wills.

As for the third, then it is *Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh* and it is also known as *Salaat-ul-Ghufraan* (The Prayer of Forgiveness), or *Salaat-ut-Takfeer* (The Prayer of Expiation) or *Salaat-ut-Tawbah* (The Prayer of Repentance) or *Salaat-ul-Inaabah* (The Prayer of Atonement). It encompasses all of these meanings, so race towards the harvest of these ripe fruits for verily it has become a prayer completely forgotten

¹ Related by Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee, ibn Maajah and others. (Saheeh Al-Jaami' no. 4515)

² The word '*SubhanAllaah*' means to "exalt Allaah and absolve Him of any defects or deficiencies." However the book we use the shorter translation of "how perfect he is" [Publishers]

and abandoned. So avail your youth before you reach old age, and your health before sickness, before you regret on the day that regret will be of no avail.

I have written this treatise not intending it to be exhaustively detailed, following up all the opinions of the scholars and their differences. Rather I intended it to be for every Muslim, avoiding lengthy analysis of *hadeeth*, and the abundant discussion on subsidiary areas of *fiqh* and the detailed tracing back of *abaadeeth* to their sources, except where this was necessary, such as my inclusion of an analysis of the chains of narration concerning *Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh* due to the differences of opinion with regards to its authenticity, and even then, not following up all the different chains of narration, because the purpose is to ascertain the authenticity of the *hadeeth* and establishing its ruling by the easiest way. Thereby, making this treatise easy and understandable for every Muslim, answering their questions, clearing their ambiguities. For its subject is related to every Muslim, the educated and the non-educated, for they are prayers that bring together the good of this world and the Hereafter, and who from amongst us does not need to seek guidance from his Lord? Who from amongst us does not need to repent from his sins?

I ask Allaah that He makes us from those who truly seek His guidance, and who repent to Him in honesty, who praise and glorify Him, and who are blessed by their actions being accepted. And may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and upon his Family and Companions.

Written by
'Adnaan Aali 'Uroor
Ramadhan 1410 (Hijree)



THE FIRST PRAYER

Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah

THE PRAYER FOR SEEKING GUIDANCE

THE FIRST PRAYER
Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah
 THE PRAYER FOR SEEKING GUIDANCE

On the authority of Sa'd ibn Abee Waqaas *radbiallaahu 'anhu* who said Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) said:

*"From the prosperity of an individual is his seeking guidance from his Lord and his contentment with what He has ordained and from the misfortune of an individual in his abandoning seeking guidance from his Lord and his displeasure after what is decreed (for him) comes to pass."*³

In his lifetime, an individual encounters many matters whose outcome are unknown, he embarks upon affairs not knowing their consequences. He does not know its good from its evil, nor its benefit from its harm.

Should he embark upon this matter or not? ... Should he propose to this woman or that woman? ... Should he go into partnership with this person or that person? ... Should he divorce his wife or should he keep her with him? ... Should he study here or over there? ... Should he travel or not?

What should he do? ... and what will become of it? Where is the good? ... He asks the near and the far, the young and the old, the scholar and the ignorant one ... perhaps they will advise him ... perhaps they will lead him in the right direction.

³ Collected by at-Tirmidhee, Ahmad, al-Haakim and others, The *hadeeth* is authentic and for a more detailed explanation of its authenticity see P.100 (section on clarification of some *ahadeeth* on *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah*)

He lives in a state of indecision and spiritual uneasiness. Frequently he is afflicted with anxiety and sorrow which overwhelms him, so he becomes demoralised and his thoughts become impaired. He does not know what to do, so he becomes enslaved by fear and indecision, a prisoner of anxiety and confusion, a captive to the unseen and the unknown. For the aforementioned reasons, Allaah ordained *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah* (The Prayer of Seeking Guidance) as a cure for his indecision and a solution to his problems, so the indecision is overturned into firmness and the anxiety into solace and the doubt to certainty and the worry to tranquillity ... and why not? For verily, the servant has sought the guidance of his Lord who knows the hidden and the most intimate secrets. He knows that which will harm him and that which will benefit him and He is fully able to avert any evil from him and bring to him all that is of benefit. So the one who truthfully seeks the guidance of Allaah is spiritually tranquil and his mind is at ease concerning the outcome of his affair.

So he is pleased with what is ordained for him, even though it may outwardly seem to be evil and occurred in a way contrary to what he desired. For an individual does not know the true reality of affairs the way Allaah knows them, nor can he perceive the true nature of affairs the way Allaah intended them to be. He does not understand the explanation of events nor comprehend their consequences.

This is, in reality, an expression of true *eemaan* (faith), that Allaah ordains for His believing servants only that which is good and He does not want for them except that which is good.

So it is not appropriate for an intelligent person to embark upon an affair nor leave it except by first seeking the guidance of his Lord and Creator.

HOW DOES THE SERVANT SEEK THE GUIDANCE OF HIS LORD?

Because the servant is weak in his comprehension, ignorant of the unseen and indecisive about his actions, Allaah ordained (*Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah*) for him whenever he is faced with an obstacle or an action, or is concerned about an affair, that he seeks guidance of his Lord. He should consult his Creator with regard to it; because He – how perfect He is – is most knowledgeable concerning the reality of the affairs and their consequences, their benefits from their harms, their good from their evil, in this world and in the Hereafter and He is the most knowledgeable with regard to the Unseen.

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبَرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظِلْمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
رَطْبٌ وَلَا يَابِسٌ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

"And with Him are the keys of the Unseen, none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea. Not a leaf falls but with his knowledge; there is not a grain in the darkness (or depths) of the earth, nor anything fresh or dry (green or withered) but is written in a Clear Record."⁴

⁴ Soorah al-An'aam 6: 59

So, how perfect He is, for He is knowledgeable about what is suitable for His servants and He is well acquainted regarding that which benefits the community and He is the most subtle, the One who has knowledge of all the hidden and secret matters and He has power over all things.

Thus, when the servant is concerned about an affair or decides upon a matter, or a problem arises in his mind and he wishes to act upon it, then he should seek guidance from his Lord before embarking upon it by the following:

Firstly: that he fulfils all the conditions of supererogatory prayer – which are the same conditions for the (obligatory) prayer except the condition of the entering of the time for that particular prayer.⁵

Secondly: that he prays two rakaahs of supererogatory prayer, with the intention of *al-Istikhaarah* (Seeking Guidance) and he should not pronounce anything other than *at-Takbeer*. This is because the place for the intention is the heart and pronouncing it is a newly invented affair which neither the Prophet (ﷺ) nor his Companions, nor any of the great Imaams ever did. Then he should turn towards Allaah with his heart, in his prayer, in humility and submission.

Thirdly: after the prayer he should make the supplication of *al-Istikhaarah* which is as follows:

⁵ The *shuroot* (conditions) of prayer are:

- The clothes being clean and free of any impurities.
- The body being in a state of purity.
- The place of prayer being clean and free of any impurities.
- Covering of the *'auwra* (that which individuals – men and women – must cover).
- Entering of the time for that particular prayer.
- Facing the *Qibla* (The *Ka'bah* in *Makkah*).
- Intention.

Refer to the Books of *Fiqh* for a detailed examination of these conditions.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَحِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ
 مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ ،
 وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ
 (وَيَسْمِي حَاجَتَهُ) خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أُمْرِي
 فَاقْدِرْهُ لِي وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا
 الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أُمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي
 وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ وَاقْدِرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي بِهِ.

"O Allaah, I seek Your counsel by Your knowledge and I seek Your assistance by Your power and I ask You from Your immense favour, for verily You are able while I am not, and verily You know while I do not, and You are the knower of the Unseen. O Allaah, if You know this affair (and here he mentions his need) to be good for me in relation to my religion, my life and aftermath, my present and future, then decree it and facilitate it for me, and bless me with it, and if You know this affair to be ill for me concerning my religion, my life and end, my present and future, then remove it from me and remove me from it, and decree for me what is good, whatever it may be, and make me satisfied with it."

Fourthly: he should have a strong assurance in his Lord and truthful reliance upon his Lord, being sure of guidance, waiting for the answer.

Fifthly: he should avoid all obstacles that prevent the supplication from being answered.

DOES ANYTHING PREVENT THE SUPPLICATION FROM BEING ANSWERED?

Yes! Verily there are obstacles which if present, they prevent the servant's supplication from being answered and become a barrier between the attainment of his request.

Al-Istikbaarah is a *du'aa* (supplication) so the Muslim should fulfil all the conditions of making a *du'aa* and should adhere to the etiquettes of making a *du'aa* and avoid all obstacles and barriers that prevent a *du'aa* from being answered. In doing so, he ensures that his *al-Istikbaarah* will be answered and his need will be fulfilled.

Know! that many people make *du'aa* but it is not answered, and that is because they did not fulfil all the conditions of the *du'aa*, or they did something that hindered the *du'aa* from being answered.

ACTIONS WHICH PREVENT THE DU'AA OF AL-ISTIKHAARAH FROM BEING ANSWERED

First: That the earnings of an individual are *haram* (from a forbidden means); such as dealing with interest, or illegally gained wealth, or taking of people's wealth unjustly; or committing oppression, or deception, or not fulfilling one's business contracts, and other than that. So he acquires that which is unlawful to him eating from it, drinking from it and wearing it – in such a case Allaah does not answer his supplication.

Aboo Hurayrah *radhiallaahu 'anhu* said: The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

"O people, verily Allaah – the Most High – is good and accepts only that which is good. Allaah ordered the Believers to do that which He commanded the Messengers. Allaah – the Most High – has said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الرُّسُلُ كُلُوا مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَاعْمَلُوا صَالِحًا

*"O you Messengers! Eat of the good things and do righteous actions."*⁶

And He said:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُلُوا مِن طَيِّبَاتِ مَا رَزَقْنَاكُمْ

*"O you who Believe! Eat of the good things wherewith We have provided for you."*⁷

⁶ Soorah al-Muminoon 23:51
⁷ Soorah al-Baqarah 2:172

*Then the Prophet mentioned (the case of) a man who, having journeyed far, dishevelled and dusty and who spreads out his hands to the sky (saying): O Lord! O Lord! – whilst his food is unlawful, his drink unlawful, his clothing unlawful and he is nourished unlawfully. So how can he be answered?"*⁸

Second: That the *du'aa* and *al-Istikhaarah* requests something which is sinful or involves oppression, in which case his *du'aa* will not be answered. For example, if he were to supplicate for something resulting in harm or cause oppression to a Muslim.

'Ubadah ibn as-Saamit *radhiallaahu 'anhu* relates that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"There is not a Muslim on the face of the earth that invokes Allaah with a supplication except that he will be granted it or will be protected from an evil equal to his supplication, so long as the supplication is not for a sinful matter or for severing the family ties. So a man said: Then we will (supplicate) plentifully. He (ﷺ) said: Allaah is more plentiful."*⁹⁻¹⁰

Meaning that Allaah is greater in answering the supplication and giving what the servant has asked for however much the servant may ask and request.

⁸ Reported by Muslim, Eng Trans. Vol 2 No. 2214
⁹ ar-Tirmidhee (no. 3568) and he declared it to be authentic as did our Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 5637

¹⁰ In a narration collected by Ahmad (3/18) and al-Haakim (1/493) the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* said: "No Muslim invokes Allaah the Exalted with a supplication free from sin or severing family ties except that he will be granted one of three things; either it will be responded forthwith or it will be saved for him in the Hereafter or he will be protected from an evil equal to his supplication." Those present said: "Then we will do much of it." [Translators Note]

Third: Abandoning the act of enjoining what is good and forbidding what is evil.

From the things that prevent the supplication from being answered is the Muslim not advising his Muslim brothers, so he does not order the good nor does he forbid the evil.

In order that Allaah answers the *du'aa*, it is befitting that a Muslim is steadfast, truthful and enjoins the good and forbids the evil.

Ordering the good and forbidding the evil is not merely the responsibility of a particular group of people or an organisation, but rather an obligation upon every Muslim, whether in his house with regard to his family, in his property and his brothers and those that are around him, with the condition of him having the ability to do that, exercising wisdom and not causing a greater evil than that which he is trying to prevent.

Hudhayfah *radhiallaahu 'anhu* said: The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"By Him in Whose Hand is my soul – you must order the good and forbid the evil, or soon will Allaah send upon you a punishment from Him and then you will supplicate to Him but your supplication will not be answered."*¹¹

Fourth: Exceeding the limits in making *du'aa* such as raising one's voice or committing an innovation in making one's *du'aa*, or making something a partner to Allaah in one's *du'aa*, or turning one's devotion away from Allaah towards His creation.

¹¹ Ahmad (5/338) and at-Tirmidhee (no.2169) and he declared it *hasan* (reliable) as did al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no.7070

Allaah – the Most Exalted – says:

أَدْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

"Call upon your Lord with humility and in private. For Allaah loves not those who exceed the limits."¹²

Whoever exceeds the limits does not truly love Allaah and Allaah does not answer those who do not love Him.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"There will be a people who will exceed the limits in making du'aa."*¹³

Fifth: The supplicant being heedless of Allaah, turning away from His *Deen*, neglectful of His orders and falling into His prohibitions.

He disobeys Allaah in times of ease and if a difficult time comes he says, 'O Lord, O Lord,' so how can his supplication be answered?

¹² Soorah al-A'raaf 7:55

¹³ Ahmad (1-172-183) Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 no. 1475 and is declared authentic by Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 3671

As for the complete Hadeeth, then it is narrated by ibn Sa'd who said: My father (Sa'd bin Abee Waqqaas) heard me say: "O Allaah, I ask Thee for Paradise, its blessings, its pleasures and such and such. I seek refuge in Thee from Hell, from its chains, from its collars and such and such. He (my father) said: I heard the messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) say: "There will be people who will exaggerate in supplication. You should not be one of them. If you are granted Paradise, you will be granted all what is good therein and if you are protected from Hell, you will be protected from what is evil therein." " (Translators Note)

Whoever forgets Allaah in times of ease, Allaah forgets him in times of difficulty.

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever is pleased that Allaah answers him in times of hardship and grief then he should supplicate to Allaah plentifully in times of ease."*¹⁴

And he (ﷺ) said:

*"Call upon Allaah whilst being sure of being answered and know that Allaah does not answer the supplication from one whose heart is heedless, inattentive."*¹⁵

Sixth: Contradicting some of the *Shar'iah* rulings and from amongst them are:

- (i) Remaining silent at the evil character of one's wife and not divorcing her.
- (ii) Lending money without it being witnessed to.
- (iii) Giving money to the foolish ones even though they may be one's own brothers or children.

¹⁴ Al-Haakim and at-Tirmidhee (no. 3479) who declared it authentic as did our Shaykh, the renowned scholar, al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 6290
¹⁵ Al-Haakim and at-Tirmidhee (3381) who declared it authentic as did Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 245

He (ﷺ) said:

"There are three types of people who call upon Allaah yet they will not be answered. A man married to a woman of evil character and he does not divorce her,¹⁶ a man who lends another man some money but does not take witnesses to it and a man who gives his money to a foolish person and Allaah – the Most High – says,

وَلَا تُؤْتُوا السُّفَهَاءَ أَمْوَالَكُمُ

*"And give not unto the foolish your property."*¹⁷⁻¹⁸

¹⁶ Imaam al-Manaawee in explanation of this *hadeeth* says in *Fayd-ul-Qadeer Sharh Jaame-us-Sagheer*, "... so when he makes *du'aa* against her it is not answered. This is because he is punishing himself by living with her when he has the freedom to separate from her." "A man who lends another man some money but does not take witnesses to it" and so he denies it. Thus when he makes a *du'aa* he is not answered because he is negligent, lax by not obeying the saying of Allaah the Most High, "and take two just witness from your men" 2/282. "A man who gives his money to a foolish person and Allaah – the Most High – says, 'And give not unto the foolish your property'." i.e. not to give him any of his money, knowing that it is prohibited, so if he makes a *du'aa* against him (the foolish man) he is not answered, because he has wasted his money and has no excuse. And verily Allaah – the Most High – says, "And give not unto the foolish your property." [Publishers Note]

¹⁷ Soorah an-Nisaa 4:5
¹⁸ Narrated by al-Haakim who declared it Saheeh and Imaam adh-Dhahabee and at-Tahaawee and others agreed with him. Shaykh al-Albaanee also declared it authentic in *as-Silsilah* no.1805

WHAT ARE THE MEANS BY WHICH
A SERVANT CAN CAUSE HIS AL-ISTIKHAARAH TO
BE ACCEPTED

Due to the fact that *al-Istikhaarah* resembles a *du'aa*, moreover it is a specific type of *du'aa*, then those means which would result in a *du'aa* being accepted are also the means for the acceptance of *al-Istikhaarah*.

One anticipates the acceptance of the *du'aa* by the following:

Firstly: that the supplicant should be certain with regards to being answered, in assurance with Allaah – the Most High – truthful in his *du'aa*. As the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“Call upon Allaah whilst being sure of being answered ...”¹⁹

So Allaah does not answer the one who is not confident of being answered, nor the one who does not trust in whom he is calling upon, nor the one who does not rely on the One who responds to his request and fulfils his need.

Secondly: that he should sincerely call upon Allaah alone, not making anything a partner to Allaah in his *du'aa*. Whoever calls upon anything alongside Allaah – the Most Exalted – or associates alongside Him a partner in any of his sayings or actions has verily nullified his *du'aa* and ruined his actions. Allaah – the Most High – says:

¹⁹ See footnote Number 15

وَأَنَّ الْمَسَاجِدَ لِلَّهِ فَلَا تَدْعُوا مَعَ اللَّهِ أَحَدًا

“And the *masaajid*²⁰ are for Allaah (alone), so invoke not anyone along with Him.”²¹

And Allaah – the Most High – says:

وَادْعُوهُ مُخْلِصِينَ لَهُ الدِّينَ

“And invoke Him only, making your religion sincere to Him.”²²

And He – the Most High – says:

قُلْ إِنَّمَا أَدْعُو رَبِّي وَلَا أُشْرِكُ بِهِ أَحَدًا

“Say (O Muhammad) I invoke only my Lord (Allaah alone) and I associate none as partners along with Him.”²³

So it is not permissible for him to attach his heart, in any form or fashion, to anyone other than his Creator and the Controller of his affairs, for He is the Unique, the Most Able to carry out what He intends. For there is none to repel what He has destined, nor is there any obstacle to prevent His Decree, the good or evil consequences thereof.

²⁰ The word *Masaajid* used in this verse is explained as being the places of prostration – i.e. the Mosques – or the limbs by which one prostrates. [Publishers Note]

²¹ Soorah al-Jinn 72:18

²² Soorah al-A'raaf 7:29

²³ Soorah al-Jinn 72:20

قُلْ مَنْ ذَا الَّذِي يَعْصِمُكُمْ مِنَ اللَّهِ إِنْ أَرَادَ بِكُمْ سُوءًا أَوْ
أَرَادَ بِكُمْ رَحْمَةً وَلَا يَجِدُونَ لَهُمْ مِنْ دُونِ اللَّهِ وَلِيًّا
وَلَا نَصِيرًا

"Say: Who is he who can protect you from Allaah if He intends harm for you, or intends mercy for you? And they will not find, besides Allaah, for themselves any Walee (protector) or any helper."²⁴

So do not call upon anyone with Allaah whoever he may be, and do not make any Prophet, Imaam, Shaykh or a Walee or any great person, a partner along with Allaah. Rather, the servant turns his face and his heart and his *du'aa* to Allaah alone. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"So if you ask, then ask only of Allaah ..."²⁵

Allaah – the Most High – did not create us except for His worship, nor did He bring us into existence except that we should ask of Him.

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"And I did not create mankind nor *jinn* except to worship Me."²⁶

The *du'aa* and the asking are both 'eebaadah (acts of worship). The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

²⁴ Soorah al-Ahzaab 33:17

²⁵ Ahmad and at-Tirmidhee who declared it authentic as did al-Haakim and adh-Dhahabee and Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami* no.7957

²⁶ Soorah ad-Dhaariyaat 51:56

"The *Du'aa* (supplication) is worship."²⁷

Allaah did not put us to trial except that we may humble ourselves to Him. As Allaah – the Most High – says:

إِذْ جَاءَهُمْ بَأْسُنَا تَضَرَّعُوا وَلَكِنْ قَسَتْ قُلُوبُهُمْ وَزَيَّنَ لَهُمُ
الشَّيْطَانُ مَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ

"When Our torment reached them, why then did they not believe with humility? But their hearts became hardened, and *Shaytaan* made fair-seeming to them that which they used to do."²⁸

Thirdly: that he should be turning to Allaah, repenting to Him, lowering himself in front of Him, in fear and humility.

إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ التَّوَّابِينَ وَيُحِبُّ الْمُتَطَهِّرِينَ

"Truly Allaah loves those who turn unto Him in repentance and loves those who purify themselves."²⁹

And He – the Most High – says:

ادْعُوا رَبَّكُمْ تَضَرُّعًا وَخُفْيَةً إِنَّهُ لَا يُحِبُّ الْمُعْتَدِينَ

"Invoke your Lord with humility and in secret, for Allaah does not love those who exceed the limits."³⁰

²⁷ Abou Dawood Eng trans Vol.1 No.1474 and at-Tirmidhee who declared it authentic as did our Shaykh al-Albaanee in *Sabeeh al-Jaami* no.3407

²⁸ Soorah al-An'aam 6:43

²⁹ Soorah al-Baqarah 2:222

³⁰ Soorah al-A'raaf 7:55

Fourthly: and that he should be pleased with Allaah's Judgement and Decree, before and after it takes place, whatever takes place and however it may take place. He should believe that the affair was not decreed for him except for a good, which Allaah has knowledge of, and that which was turned away from him was good for him, of which Allaah has full knowledge of.

AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THE SUPPLICATION SHOULD BE MADE

We will give an example of a man wanting to propose to a woman. He prays two rakaahs with the intention of *al-Istikhaarah* then he supplicates with the following *du'aa*.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ
مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ ،
وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ زَوْجِي مِنْ فُلَانَةٍ
بِنْتِ فُلَانٍ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أُمْرِي فَاقْدِرْ لِي
وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ
لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أُمْرِي فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ
وَاقْدِرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ ثُمَّ ارْضِنِي بِهِ.

"O Allaah, I seek Your counsel by Your knowledge and I seek Your assistance by Your power and I ask You from Your immense favour, for verily You are able while I am not, and verily You know while I do not, and You are the knower of the Unseen. O Allaah, if You know this affair – my marrying so and so, the daughter of so and so – to be good for me in relation to my religion, my life and aftermath, my present and future, then decree it and

facilitate it for me, and bless me with it, and if You know this affair – my marrying so and so, the daughter of so and so – to be detrimental for me concerning my religion, my life and end, my present and future then remove it from me and remove me from it, and decree for me what is good, whatever it may be and make me satisfied with it."

WHAT IS THE PROOF FOR THIS?

It is not permissible for a Muslim to perform any act of worship, however small it may be in his opinion, thinking that it is good, except that this act of worship is established in the *Shar'iah*, which either the Prophet (ﷺ) did, or ordered, or the Companions of the Prophet (ﷺ) acted upon. Whatever is besides that is an innovation and every innovation is misguidance.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever introduces something new into this affair of ours, then it is rejected."*³¹

As for the proof for the permissibility of *al-Istikhaarah* then Imaam al-Bukhaaree narrates in his *Saheeh*:

"Mutraf ibn 'Abdullaab Aboo Mus'ab narrated to us, that 'Abdur-Rabmaan ibn Abee al-Mawaal narrated to us from Mubammad ibn al-Munkadir from Jaabir radhiallaahu 'anhu who said: The Prophet (ﷺ) used to teach us al-Istikhaarah (seeking of guidance) in all of our affairs like he would teach us a Soorah of the Qur'aan saying:

"If any of you is concerned about an affair, then let him pray two rakaabs other than the obligatory prayers after which he should supplicate: 'O Allaah, I seek Your counsel by Your knowledge and I seek Your assistance by Your Power and I ask You from Your immense favour, for verily You are able while I am not, and verily You know and I do not, and You

³¹ Muslim Eng Trans Vol.3 No.4266

are the knower of the Unseen. O Allaah, if You know this affair to be good for me in relation to my religion, my life and end (or he said: my present and future), then decree and facilitate it for me and bless me with it. And if You know this affair to be detrimental for me concerning my religion, my life and end (or he said: my present or future), then remove it from me and remove me from it and decree for me what is good wherever it be and make me satisfied with it.' And he mentions his need.³²

³² Ahmad (3/544), al-Bukhaaree Eng Trans Vol. 2 No. 263, Aboo Dawood Eng Trans Vol.1 No. 1533, an-Nasaa'ee (no. 3253), at-Tirmidhee (no. 480) and ibn Maajah (no. 1383)

WHAT DOES AL-ISTIKHAARAH MEAN?

The linguistic meaning: *al-Istikhaarah* comes from the verb *Istakhaarah*, which means 'seeking/requesting guidance in what is good'. So *al-Istikhaarah* is the noun for this request or action.

The *Shar'iah* meaning: that a servant seeks guidance from his Lord upon the manner described by the Prophet (ﷺ) by praying two rakaahs of superogatory prayer, then he supplicates with the specific *du'aa* for *al-Istikhaarah* for doing an action which is *mubabbh* (allowed) or for leaving it, or in an obligatory or recommended action in which he has a choice.

AN EXPLANATION OF THE MEANINGS OF THIS GREAT DU'AA

"Verily, the Prophet (ﷺ) taught us *al-Istikbaarah* in all of our affairs just as he taught us a *Soorah* from the *Qur'aan*."

Meaning that he (ﷺ) used to teach us the memorisation of the *du'aa al-Istikbaarah* and its perfection, just as he used to teach us *Soorahs* from the *Qur'aan* or its verses and their perfection.

"If any of you is concerned about an affair"

Meaning if a matter comes to his mind or he is faced with an affair and he makes a firm resolve to undertake it.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَحِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ

"O Allaah, I seek your counsel by your knowledge"

Meaning I request from You that You choose what is good for me and I seek Your help in this need of mine and I seek a means of approach to You by Your knowledge which encompasses everything in the heavens and the earth.

Seeking help by Allaah's knowledge, which is an attribute of His – the Most High – and seeking a means of approach by it, is from the most appropriate and distinct means of seeking help in this type of situation. This is because the need of the one who is seeking guidance is connected with the Unseen. Therefore, since the attribute of Allaah's knowledge extends over everything, encompassing everything, it is the most appropriate attribute by which one seeks help through and means of approach to Allaah.

أَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ

"And I seek Your assistance by Your Power"

Meaning I request from You help in that which You have decreed for me, and I seek means of approach to You by Your Power. Seeking strength through the Power of Allaah and seeking guidance through His knowledge incorporates both the seeking of help and approach to Allaah – And Allaah knows best!

وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ

"And You are the knower of the Unseen"

So no one knows the Unseen other than Him, except by His permission.

This permission is of two types:

- (i) Permissions which He gives through revelation and speech – which is particular to the Prophets and Messengers.

عَالِمُ الْغَيْبِ فَلَا يُظْهِرُ عَلَى غَيْبِهِ أَحَدًا ۖ إِلَّا مَنِ ارْتَضَىٰ مِنْ رَسُولٍ فَإِنَّهُ يَسْلُكُ مِنْ بَيْنِ يَدَيْهِ وَمِنْ خَلْفِهِ رَصَدًا

*"(He alone) the All-Knower of the Unseen, and He reveals to none His unseen. Except to a Messenger whom He has chosen and then He makes a band of watching guards (angels) to march before him and behind him."*³³

³³ Soorah al-Jinn 72:26-27

(ii) Permission granted through the knowledge of the way in which Allaah's creation of the universe operates, and its scientific realities.

So whatever man – believer or disbeliever – comes to know from that which was previously unknown, like the discovery of electricity and knowledge of what lies in the womb – male or female – and other than that, which is based upon knowledge and not upon superstition or deceit, is from the temporary unseen and is not from the Unseen which no one knows except Allaah, and that which He did not give permission to be disclosed.

اللَّهُمَّ إِن كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ

"O Allaah, if You know this affair to be good"

al-Istikhaarah is dependent upon three things:

- (i) the knowledge of Allaah and Him knowing that which is good.
- (ii) the decreeing of this good, and its decree which is based upon His power.
- (iii) Allaah's blessing which does not diminish and His generosity which is not repelled.

For these reasons, it is most appropriate and wise that this *du'aa* should begin by seeking a means of approach to Allaah by His knowledge and seeking help by His knowledge in choosing what is good for him. He then follows this by what is required for his choice (and what is to be ordained) to be attained, by seeking help through the power of Allaah, and the ability to enact the action. Therefore it is most appropriate that he should seek help through the power of Allaah and seek a means of approach to Him by this great attribute.

Then, because the affair requires the blessings of Allaah and His favours so that the choice is blessed and the benefit from it, it is appropriate that he should ask Allaah for His blessings which encompass all things. And this is the loftiest of manners and completeness of gratitude.

Then, from the manners of making *du'aa* and the realisation of servitude to Allaah, is that the servant should affirm in himself and proclaim with his tongue the all encompassing knowledge of Allaah and His great power – and that they are two great attributes of the Most Merciful. From the completeness of servitude to Allaah is that it should be followed by the servant acknowledging his inability and ignorance and that he is dependent upon his Lord. Therefore, he says:

"For verily You are able while I am not, and verily You know while I do not and You are the knower of the Unseen."

Since the servant is short sighted, his affairs unsettled, not being pleased with what is given to him and not content with what is ordained for him, it is appropriate that he should end his *du'aa* by asking for contentment in what will be ordained for him. So the gift of contentment and pleasure is from the greatest of gifts because in it lies tranquillity of the heart and pleasure with one's Lord.

Know that this great *du'aa* contains important affairs, intricate details and hidden subtleties.

For it contains affirmation of *Tawbeed* in Allaah's Lordship, and humility in worship of Him, and *emaan* in His Names and Attributes and the servant fulfilling servitude to Him, from reliance upon Him, seeking His help, asking and pleading in His knowledge and Power, for His blessing and generosity, then requesting contentment in what

is decreed for him. So whoever is pleased with his Lord and His Lord is pleased with him, has attained felicity leaving behind the barrier and having passed over the bridge into Paradise.

So if *al-Istikhaarah* contained nothing more than the realisation of these great meanings it would be enough in goodness. Verily, how the Perfect He is, who prescribed for His servants the good of this world and the Hereafter.

WHAT ARE THE AFFAIRS IN WHICH ONE MAKES AL-ISTIKHAARAH?



The affairs in which a servant is faced with revolve around the following five categories: *al-Waajib* (obligatory), *al-Mustababb* (recommended), *al-Mubabb* (allowed), *al-Makruh* (disliked) and *al-Haram* (forbidden).

One does not make *al-Istikhaarah* in the obligatory and recommended or disliked and forbidden actions. This is because the obligatory actions are forbidden to leave and obligatory to perform, whether the servant makes *al-Istikhaarah* for them or not. And the forbidden actions are obligatory to leave and forbidden to do, whether the servant makes *al-Istikhaarah* in them or not. So he does not make *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to praying or performing *Hajj*, nor drinking of alcohol or in any act of disobedience.

Rather, he makes *al-Istikhaarah* only in those affairs which are allowed (*mubabb*) like the worldly affairs, travelling, those matters in which the result is unknown, the modes of transport, business dealings, trade and the places and times in which one has a choice.

He can also make *al-Istikhaarah* in those obligatory and recommended affairs in which there is a choice – the seeking of knowledge is recommended and sometimes it can be obligatory, so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* concerning the type of knowledge to seek, the time and the place. Because the servant has a choice with regard to place (of study) so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to it, and he has a choice about the direction of study, so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to that. Likewise, he has a choice regarding the institution in which he studies, so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* regarding it. But he does not seek *al-Istikhaarah* about whether he should be seeking knowledge itself.

Seeking of worldly knowledge is recommended but the servant has a choice between what type of knowledge to study – so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* concerning the type of knowledge to study, not in seeking knowledge of the *Deen* (religion).

Hajj is obligatory, so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* concerning the people who he makes *Hajj* with and the way to travel and when to depart.

Jihad is obligatory but he makes *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to the time, the place and the direction, in specifying the *Ameer* (Leader) and in organising the army.

Marriage is obligatory but the man has a choice with respect to whom he marries, and the woman has a choice with respect to whom she marries. So the man makes *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to a particular woman, and the woman makes *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to marrying a particular man – not in getting married itself.

Also one may make *al-Istikhaarah* if one is faced with conflicting obligatory duties, or conflicting recommended duties. Which of the two should he do, which one should be put forward and which one should he delay?

An example of how two obligatory duties can be conflicting is the case of marriage and *Hajj* for the one who only possesses enough money for one but not both. An example of how recommended duties can be conflicting is like supererogatory *Jihad*³⁴ with supererogatory seeking of knowledge, or supererogatory *Hajj*.

³⁴ *Jihad* is an extremely important topic which is incumbent to understand correctly, it has conditions and various forms but more importantly strict guidelines and the scholars must be consulted on such matters.

The scholars have categorised *Jihad* into the following categories: obligatory and supererogatory. The obligatory *Jihad* then further subdivides into that which is obligated upon every individual (*Fard-ul-'Ayn*) and that which if a group uphold then others are excused (*Fard-ul-Kifaayah*). The scholars have detailed, in the books of *Fiqh*, the situations and circumstances when *Jihad* becomes *Fard-ul-'Ayn* or *Fard-ul-Kifaayah* [Publishers Note]

One may also make *al-Istikhaarah* in something that is recommended, but in doing so may result in some harm – like the donating of blood and what resembles it.

In summary: *al-Istikhaarah* is made in every affair which is *Mubabb* (allowed) and it can be in obligatory or recommended actions which one has a choice in, as in the choice of time, place or in specification, or when obligatory or supererogatory actions conflict with one another. This clarifies the statement of Jaabir ibn 'Abdullaah *radhiallaahu 'anhu*:

"He used to teach us *al-Istikhaarah* in all of our affairs."

Ibn Abee Hamza said (concerning the statement of Jaabir):

"It is general, but what is intended is the specific meaning because *al-Istikhaarah* is not made with regard to performing the obligatory and recommended actions, nor with regard to leaving the forbidden and disliked actions. Hence it is confined to those affairs which are *Mubabb* (allowed) and the recommended, if two affairs conflict with one another; which one should be begin with and which one should be suffice with?"

Ibn Hajr al-'Asqalaanee said commenting on the above:

"*Al-Istikhaarah* can also be done in the obligatory and recommended actions in which one has a choice, wherein there is a broad length of time and this extends to all the affairs in general – the great and the insignificant matters, because perhaps a great matter is based on something seemingly insignificant."³⁵

Thus, *al-Istikhaarah* can be made in all of these affairs, whether one is sure or unsure about them. This is because the purpose of *al-Istikhaarah* is asking Allaah to grant the ability to do something, and having resolve to do something does not contradict making *al-Istikhaarah*.

³⁵ *Faith-ul-Baaree* (11/184)

CAN AL-ISTIKHAARAH BE MADE IN THOSE AFFAIRS
WHOSE RESULT IS KNOWN?

Yes, *al-Istikhaarah* can be made in worldly affairs whose result is known because Allaah alone knows the reality of the results and their consequences. So whatever a servant may think from his own opinion may not always be the correct opinion. For not every affair which is outwardly good is in reality good – and not every affair which outwardly seems to be evil is in reality evil. So how many times did a person consider something to be good yet it resulted in his destruction? And how many times did a person consider something to be evil yet it resulted in his success? And sufficient for us is the saying of Allaah – the Most High:

وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا
وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"And it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and that you like a thing which is bad for you and Allaah knows but you do not know."³⁶

Ibn-ul-Qayyim said:

"From the subtle implications of this ayah is that it instructs the servant to resign his affairs to the One who knows their consequences, and to be pleased with what He has chosen and prescribed for him, desiring a beautiful end.

³⁶ Soorah al-Baqarah 2:216

From this is that he does not suggest something to his Lord, nor does he choose something for Him, nor ask Him of anything that he does not have knowledge of. For perhaps a matter may result in his harm and destruction, yet he is not aware of it. So the servant does not choose something for His Lord, rather he asks Him for the best choice and that He makes him happy with that which He chooses for him, such that there is nothing more beneficial to him than that."³⁷

³⁷ *al-Fawaaid* (no. 247)

WHAT IS THE BENEFIT AND WISDOM OF AL-ISTIKHAARAH?

There are great benefits in *al-Istikhaarah* which are greater than the answering of the *du'aa* and the fulfilment of the request.

The first of these benefits is the realisation of the meaning of worship for Allaah – the Most Exalted – comprising of humility to Him, expressing one's weakness and lowliness to Him, manifesting one's need and dependence upon Him, imploring Him, asking for the best from Him. If *al-Istikhaarah* contained no more than this, it would be sufficient in goodness. In this is the realisation of *Tawbeed* of worship, which is a pillar of *al-Tawbeed* and a condition of *eemaan*.³⁸

وَمَا خَلَقْتُ الْجِنَّ وَالْإِنْسَ إِلَّا لِيَعْبُدُونِ

"And I did not create mankind nor *jinn* except to worship Me."³⁹

The second of these benefits is the realisation of the meaning of *eemaan*, and that in His Hands are the keys of the affairs and He knows the Unseen matters of the heavens and the earth and He loves good for His servants and He chooses that which benefits them. In this is the realisation of *Tawbeed* of Allaah's Lordship and *Tawbeed* of Allaah's Names and Attributes. He – the Most High – says:

³⁸ See Explanatoin of *Tawbeed* and its three pillars [Translators Note]
³⁹ Soorah adh-Dhaariyaat 51:56

وَرَبُّكَ يَخْلُقُ مَا يَشَاءُ وَيَخْتَارُ

"And your Lord creates whatsoever He wills and chooses..."⁴⁰

And He – the Most High – says:

وَعِنْدَهُ مَفَاتِحُ الْغَيْبِ لَا يَعْلَمُهَا إِلَّا هُوَ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا فِي الْبُرِّ وَالْبَحْرِ
وَمَا تَسْقُطُ مِنْ وَرَقَةٍ إِلَّا يَعْلَمُهَا وَلَا حَبَّةٌ فِي ظِلْمَاتِ الْأَرْضِ وَلَا
رَطْبٍ وَلَا يَابِسٍ إِلَّا فِي كِتَابٍ مُبِينٍ

"And with Him are the keys of the *Ghaib* (all that is hidden), none knows them but He. And He knows whatever there is on the earth and in the sea; not a leaf falls but He knows it. There is not a grain in the darkness of the earth nor anything fresh or dry, but it is written in a clear record."⁴¹

Ibn-ul-Qayyim, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said:

"So this *du'aa* comprises of the affirmation of Allaah's existence – how perfect and free from imperfection He is – and the affirmation of His perfect attributes, from His perfect knowledge, power and will. As well as the affirmation of His Lordship and resigning the affairs to Him, seeking help in Him and reliance upon Him, and escaping from personal responsibility, thus freeing himself from any power or strength except in Allaah. The servant acknowledging his weakness and inability with regard to knowing and realising that which benefits him, and all of this is in the Hands of his Protector and Creator, the true deity."⁴²

⁴⁰ Soorah al-Qasas 28:68
⁴¹ Soorah al-An'aam 6:59

⁴² *Zaad al-Ma'aad* (2/442)

The third of these benefits is the assuredness in Allaah and pleasure with His decree before and after the *al-Istikbaarah*, reliance upon Him, and resigning the affair to Him, thus removing the confusion, hesitation and anxiety which weakens the self, wearing down the body, giving way to distress and sorrow.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim said:

"If he resigns his affair to his Lord and is pleased with what He chooses for him, his Lord supports him with strength, firm resolve and patience in what He chooses for him. Likewise, his Lord saves him from the weaknesses which are the result of the servant choosing for himself. Then his Lord shows him the beautiful results of His choice for him, which he would not have arrived at if he was left to choose for himself."

He relieves himself from the burdensome thoughts concerning the numerous choices, and empties his heart from suppositions and contemplation by which he ascends the mountains and falls down from others.⁴³ And despite that he cannot escape from that which has been decreed for him. So if he is happy with Allaah's choice, then the decree overtakes him and he is thankful."

In it is tranquillity and pleasure with the decree of Allaah – the Most High – realising the great pillar of *eemaan* and a great reward with Allaah. Not to mention that in it is the clarification of anxieties, tranquillity to the hearts and peacefulness to the souls.

Whomsoever is granted tranquillity and pleasure at the judgement of Allaah and His decree, has been granted an abundant good and no one experiences this except the believer.

⁴³ In my humble opinion Ibn-ul-Qayyim is describing the thoughts of a man which overtake him so much so that it would seem that he were climbing a mountain. And dwelling upon the pitfalls would seem as though he were falling down others. [Translators Note]

Thus, as the mother of Musaa had trust and assurance in Allaah – the Most Exalted – she threw the delight of her heart into the Nile, waves clashing with him, the water carrying him to what would seem, to the onlooker, to be the last sight of him. So it is an affair which breaks the heart, tears apart the innermost self and burns the soul ... A mother throwing her son to destruction can only happen through trust and assurance in Allaah and reliance upon Him, and none can do that except those who truly rely upon Allaah and are confident in Him.

Whoever experiences the taste of pleasure in Allaah's predestination and decree, whatever and however it may be, becomes familiar with calamities and has patience in them and turns away from and abandons anxiety and confusion.

The fourth of these benefits is that Allaah grants the request of one who makes *al-Istikbaarah*. For the one who makes *al-Istikbaarah*, then Allaah grants him two favours: the first of which is that Allaah answers the *du'aa* of His servant and this is a great benefit and an evidence of the servant's piety or him gradually achieving it.

The second favour is that Allaah grants His servant the ability in enacting the affair for which he sought guidance and choosing the good for him, turning and directing him towards it rather than abandoning him and leaving him astray.

WHAT SHOULD A SERVANT DO AFTER HE MAKES AL-ISTIKHAARAH?

After the servant makes *al-Istikhaarah* in the prescribed manner, nothing is upon him except that he should firmly resolve to do that which he perceives to be correct, after placing his trust truly upon Allaah.

وَمَنْ يَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ فَهُوَ حَسْبُهُ

"And whoever puts his trust in Allaah, He is sufficient for him ..." ⁴⁴

فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ

"Then, when you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allaah." ⁴⁵

After that, he should be truthful in his intention, sincere in the actions in the matter in which he has sought guidance.

فَإِذَا عَزَمَ الْأَمْرُ فَلَوْ صدَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَكَانَ خَيْرًا لَهُمْ

"And when the matter is resolved on, then if they had been true to Allaah it would have been better for them." ⁴⁶

⁴⁴ Soorah at-Talaq 65:3

⁴⁵ Soorah Aali-Imraan 3:159

⁴⁶ Soorah Muhammad 47:21

He does that which appears to him to be correct without hesitation or sadness, without sluggishness or fear, whether his heart is happy or not about the affair, whether the happiness of his heart was before or after making the *al-Istikhaarah*, because the affair is not determined by the happiness or constriction of the heart, but rather it is determined by Allaah granting and making the affair easy. So perhaps his heart is happy for an affair but Allaah does not intend it for him, so He does not make it easy for him even though he may begin it. And perhaps his heart is displeased with regard to an affair and Allaah intends it for him, decrees it for him and makes it easy for him.

So the affair is based on two things:

The first – the truthfulness of the servant with Allaah and his certainty in Him and fulfilling the conditions of the *al-Istikhaarah* being answered.

The second, Allaah – the Most High – answering the servant in his *al-Istikhaarah*.

So if these conditions are fulfilled, he does not give any relevance to the happiness of the heart or its constriction, for none of the creation whoever it may be, can prevent good if Allaah intends it for him, nor can they turn away evil if Allaah – the Most High – decreed it for him.

وَإِنْ يَمَسُّنَّكَ اللَّهُ بِضُرٍّ فَلَا كَاشِفَ لَهُ إِلَّا هُوَ وَإِنْ يُرِدْكَ بِخَيْرٍ فَلَا رَادَّ لِفَضْلِهِ يُصِيبُ بِهِ مَنْ يَشَاءُ مِنْ عِبَادِهِ وَهُوَ الْغَفُورُ الرَّحِيمُ

"And if Allaah touches you with hurt, there is none who can alleviate it but He; and if He intends any good for you, there is none who can repel His favour which He causes to reach whomsoever of His slaves He wills. And He is Most Forgiving, Most Merciful." ⁴⁷

⁴⁷ Soorah Yunus 10:107

Al-'Izz ibn 'Abdus-Salaam said:

*"He does whatever comes upon him."*⁴⁸

From the above, one realises the incorrectness of what *al-Haafidh* said in *al-Faith* saying:

*"... and that which is relied upon is that he should not act according to the (expansion) happiness of the heart if he had a strong desire to do that before actually making al-Istikbaarah."*⁴⁹

This is because the matter is not connected to the determination of the servant nor by his desires, nor by the happiness of his heart, but rather it is determined by what Allaah knows and does. Thus, the affair is decreed whether he had a strong desire in it or not, whether he hated it or desired it.

As for the hadeeth of *Anas* radhiallaahu 'anh: "... then look towards what your heart follows for in it lies the good," then it is very weak (not authentic).

Therefore, the stages of *al-Istikbaarah* are:

- Being concerned about an affair,
- Making *al-Istikbaarah* and asking for advice,
- Reliance upon Allaah,
- Then the one making *al-Istikbaarah* acting according to what he considers correct.

⁴⁸ *Faith-ul-Baaree* (11/187)

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*

WHAT IS THE IMPORTANCE OF DREAMS AND THEIR LIKE?



As mentioned in the previous reply, the matter is determined by Allaah making the affair easy and Him granting it, not by the expansion of one's chest, nor by a dream which a person sees nor by anything else which is not established from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ), his companions or any of the great Imaams.

Then, the one making *al-Istikbaarah* should proceed as he wishes, but he cannot proceed except in the way Allaah has decreed for him,

*"Everyone's path for which he is created for is made smooth for him."*⁵⁰

So let us assume that he had a dream. How does he know that the dream is from the Most Merciful and not from *shaytaan* or from the talking of his soul?

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Dreams are of three types; glad tidings from Allaah, whispering from the soul or frightening thoughts from shaytaan."*⁵¹

⁵⁰ *Al-Bukhaaree Eng Trans. Vol. 8 No. 595 and Muslim Eng Trans. Vol. 4 No. 6404*

⁵¹ *At-Tirmidhee and ibn Maajah and is in Saheeh al-Jaami' no. 3533*

And he (ﷺ) said:

*"Dreams are of three types, from them: frightening thoughts from sbaytaan to make the son of Aadam despair and scared, that which a person is concerned about while awake so he sees it in his dream and (a type of dream) which is one forty-sixth of prophethood."*⁵²

Whatever the case may be, whether he has a dream or not, matters like the expansion or restriction of the heart are the same. So having a dream or not makes no difference. Rather it may be from the means which Allaah ordained, for what He intends from the facilitation of a matter or the turning away from a matter. And Allaah ordains what He wills and how He wills.

⁵² Ibn Maajah and others and is in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no.3534

IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO REPEAT AL-ISTIKHAAARAH MORE THAN ONCE FOR A PARTICULAR MATTER?



Supererogatory actions are of various types:

It can be pure worship (without an exterior reason) like *witr* and the two rakaahs before *fajr*, or it can be a worship for Allaah but is determined by an exterior reason like the praying of two rakaahs upon entering a mosque, or it can be a prayer of need which is based upon the need of a servant for his Lord but it is combined with a *du'aa*, like the prayer for rain⁵³ and *al-Istikhaarah*.

So if the prayer is of a type which is pure worship, then it is not permissible, by consensus, to repeat it, like the *witr* prayer and the two rakaahs before *fajr*.

Also, if the prayer is for a particular reason, it is not repeated except if the reason for its performance recurs.

As for the prayer that is for a need and is of a particular description, then the majority of the people of knowledge allow it to be repeated. Verily, Imaam ash-Shaafi'ee, Imaam Ahmad and Imaam Maalik, and other scholars, allowed the repeating of the prayer for rain.⁵⁴

Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah resembles – the most – the prayer for rain for they are both for a specific need and because both prayers are combined with a *du'aa*. This type of prayer closely resembles a specific *du'aa*; so if we add to this the linguistic meaning of *Salaah* which is *du'aa*, and that making *du'aa* plentifully is something desired, then we do not see anything wrong with repeating *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah*.

⁵³ This is known as *Salaat-ul-Istisqaa*
⁵⁴ *Al-Magbni* (2/95)

As for the saying of some of our noble brothers, that it is not permissible to repeat *Salaat-ul-Istikbaarah* because there is no evidence of its repetition and because it is a specific *du'aa*, which succeeds a specific *Salaah*, then this is not sufficient to disallow its repetition, because it is not from inventing something new in the religion. Therefore, repeating it is allowed since nothing preventing it exists.

Furthermore, there is no report which mentions the repeating of the prayer for rain, even though it comprises of a specific *du'aa* made after or before a specific *Salaah* and despite this, the vast majority of the scholars allowed it to be repeated.⁵⁵

We can also allow it to be repeated due to the fact that the prayer of a solar or lunar eclipse is repeated until the sun or moon are fully visible⁵⁶ - so the eclipse prayer is a *Salaah* for a particular need and it consists of a *du'aa*, thus resembling both the prayer for rain and *Salaat-ul-Istikbaarah*.

From al-Mugheerah *radbiallaahu 'anbu* that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Verily the sun and the moon are two signs from the signs of Allaah - the Mighty and Sublime - they do not eclipse on account of the death of anyone nor for the birth (of anyone). So if you see the two (i.e. in eclipse), supplicate to Allaah the Most High and pray until the eclipse has cleared."*⁵⁷

So his saying (ﷺ) 'until the eclipse has cleared' is a clear proof that repeating the prayer is allowed until the eclipse has completely cleared.

⁵⁵ *Al-Mawusu'ah al-Fiqhiyyah* (3/306), *al-Mughni ma'a ash-Sharh* (2/295) and *al-Majmoos* (5/77)

⁵⁶ i.e. the eclipse has passed [Translator]

⁵⁷ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 2. no. 168 and Saheeh Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 2. no. 1966

As for the objection of those who do not allow *al-Istikbaarah* to be repeated, in that it is a *Salaah* and a specific *du'aa*, then this does not prevent it from being repeated, and whatever their answer was concerning repeating the prayer for rain whilst it is a *Salaah* and a particular *du'aa*, is also our answer regarding the repeating of *Salaat-ul-Istikbaarah*.

So whatever is said concerning it, it is a *du'aa* and it is recommended to repeat *du'aas* and to be earnest in them, whether they are specific or not.

Yes, if *Salaat-ul-Istikbaarah* were a prayer simply for an external reason, we would have disallowed its repetition. But it is a prayer for a need, so it is closer to a *du'aa* than anything else. Therefore, we hold the correct opinion to be the permissibility of repeating it, and Allaah knows best.

From amongst those who give *fatwa* (legal ruling) in accordance with this in our time are, our Shaykh the renowned scholar 'Abdul-'Azees ibn Baaz and also our teacher, the scholar of *hadeeth* al-Albaanee, may Allaah - the Most High - grant them every good. Except that Shaykh al-Albaanee holds repetition to be allowed only when the soul is not content with the first *Salaah*.

From those who allowed the repetition of *al-Istikbaarah*, rather, recommended it, is al-Haafidh al-'Iraaqee and ash-Shawkaanee leaned towards this opinion in saying:

"You could prove the repetition is allowed by the authentic hadeeth that the Prophet (ﷺ), 'when he made a du'aa, he would do so three times.' And even though this refers to repeating of the du'aa in one given time, then likewise the repeating of the Salaah which is combined with a du'aa is also permissible, like the prayer for rain."

As for the one who used the *hadeeth* of Anas as a proof of repetition, who said: The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"O Anas. If you are concerned about an affair, seek guidance (by praying al-Istikbaarah) from your Lord with regard to it, seven times."*⁵⁸

Then it is very weak and the scholars of *hadeeth* are agreed upon its weakness.

An-Nawawee said:

*"Its chain is gbareeb"⁵⁹ and in are those whom I do not know of."*⁶⁰

Al-'Iraaqee said:

*"The hadeeth is saaqit"⁶¹ there is no proof in it."*⁶²

Al-'Asqalaanee said:

"Its chain is waabin jiddan"⁶³, "⁶⁴

⁵⁸ Reported by ibn as-Sinneeh

⁵⁹ A term in the science of *hadeeth* used to describe a chain of narration that has a single narrator in one of the levels of the chain of narration. The second part of the saying of an-Nawawee "in it are those whom I do not know of", shows that he is hinting at its weakness [Publishers Note]

⁶⁰ *Al-Adybbkaar* (111)

⁶¹ The terms *Saaqit* and *Waabin* and *Waabin Jiddan* are terms in the science of *hadeeth* often particular to certain Scholars of *Hadeeth* and they are used to say that the *hadeeth* is extremely weak [Publishers Note]

⁶² *Nayl al-Awtar* (3/74)

⁶³ See footnote no. 61

⁶⁴ *Al-Fath* (11/187)

After writing what has preceded, I came across a saying of 'Abdullaah ibn az-Zubair *radhiallaahu 'anhu* in Saheeh Muslim after the *Ka'bah* caught fire:

*"If the house of anyone of you were to catch fire, he would not be happy until he had it reconstructed. So how about the house of your Lord? Verily, I will pray al-Istikbaarah three times, and then make up my mind about this affair."*⁶⁵

So I was very happy when I came across this because it strengthens that which I previously mentioned from preferring the opinion of repeating of the *Salaat-ul-Istikbaarah* being allowed. And Allaah is the One who guides towards that which is correct.

⁶⁵ Saheeh Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 2 no. 3083

DOES SALAAT-UL-ISTIKHAARAH HAVE A PARTICULAR OR FAVOURED TIME?

Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah does not have a particular or specific time, rather it can be performed at any time. And there is nothing wrong if one strives to perform it in the times in which a *du'aa* is more likely to be answered, based on what I have previously mentioned, that *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah* is a *Salaah* for a need and a *du'aa*.

From the favoured times for *du'aa* in which one hopes it to be accepted:

1. The time between the *Adbaan* and *Iqaamah* due to the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

*"The du'aa between the Adbaan and Iqaamah is not refused."*⁶⁶

2. During rainfall. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Two (du'aas) are not refused: The du'aa during the call for prayer and at the time of rainfall." And in a narration: *"... And underneath the rain."*⁶⁷

3. During the last third of the night. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Our Lord – the Blessed and Most High – descends every night to the lowest heaven when only the last third of the night remains and says: Who is calling upon Me so that I may

⁶⁶ Ahmad, Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 52, at-Tirmidhee and others and is in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 3408

⁶⁷ Al-Bukhaaree, Muslim and Ahmad

*answer him? Who is asking Me so that I may give what he asks? Who is seeking My forgiveness so that I may forgive him?*⁶⁸

4. The last hour of Friday. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"There is an hour on Friday that if a Muslim coincides with it, standing in Salaah asking Allaah for goodness, then he is surely granted what he asks for."*⁶⁹

The majority of the scholars are of the opinion that it refers to the last hour based on the *hadeeth* of the Prophet (ﷺ):

*"Search for it in the last hour after 'Asr (Salaah)."*⁷⁰

And in the previous *hadeeth*, *Salaah* has been explained as meaning, waiting for the prayer.⁷¹

I say: It is likely that *Salaah* in the *hadeeth* refers to its linguistic meaning which is *du'aa*. And Allaah knows best.

5. Whilst travelling. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"There is no doubt in three supplications being answered: The supplication of the father against his son, the supplication of the traveller and the supplication of the one who is oppressed."*⁷²

⁶⁸ Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 1656

⁶⁹ Abou Dawood, at-Tirmidhee and is in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 2120

⁷⁰ Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 1043

⁷¹ This is because it is not permissible to pray supererogatory *Salaah* after the *'Asr Salaah* [Translators Note]

⁷² Ahmad, Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 1531, at-Tirmidhee and our Shaykh declared it *Sabeeh* in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 3031

6. On The Night of *Al-Qadaar* (Decree). Allaah – the Most High – said:

لَيْلَةُ الْقَدْرِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ أَلْفِ شَهْرٍ

"The Night of *Al-Qadar* (Decree) is better than a thousand months."⁷³ ⁷⁴

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Search for it in the last ten nights of *Ramadh*aan."⁷⁵

⁷³ i.e. worshipping Allaah in that night is better than worshipping Him for a thousand months [Translators Note]

⁷⁴ Soorah *Al-Qadar* 97:3

⁷⁵ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree. Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 234

IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO PERFORM SALAAT-UL-ISTIKHAARAH IN THE PROHIBITED TIMES OF SALAAH AND WHAT ARE THOSE TIMES?



The general principle is that supererogatory prayer is not allowed in the times when performing *Salaah* is prohibited. However, the scholars differ with regard to the supererogatory prayer which is performed due to an external reason.⁷⁶

The correct opinion which the *mubaqqiqoon*⁷⁷ are upon, is that these prayers are allowed in these times – like the *Salaah* for entering the mosque, the *Salaah* after making *wudoo'* and *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah*; particularly if the time is constricted for him or he is compelled by his situation to pray at this time.

However if he were to leave performing *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah* in these prohibited times, then that would thereby avoid the differences of opinion and it would be more hopeful for him in attaining tranquillity for verily, the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Leave that which you doubt for that which you do not doubt."⁷⁸

⁷⁶ They are the prayers which are dependent on external reasons such as the *Salaah* for entering the mosque, the *Salaah* performed after making *wudoo'* and *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah*.

⁷⁷ This term refers to those scholars who weigh up all the various opinions concerning an issue and then give their verdict according to the opinion found to be closest to the evidences [Translator Note]

⁷⁸ Ahmad, at-Tirmidhee and an-Nasaa'ee

The prohibited times for prayer are:

- From after *Salaat-ul-Fajr* until the sun becomes high.⁷⁹
- At the time when the sun is at its zenith until it passes that point.
- The time when the sun is yellow until it sets.

'Uqbah ibn Naaf'ee *radhiallaahu 'anhu* said:

*"There are three times in which Allaah's Messenger (ﷺ) forbade us to pray or bury our dead; when the sun begins to rise until it is fully up, when the sun is at its highest at midday till it passes over the meridian, and when the sun draws near to setting until it sets."*⁸⁰

Aboo Sa'eed *radhiallaahu 'anhu* said: the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"There is no Salaah after Salaat-ul-Fajr until the sun rises, and there is no Salaah after Salaat-ul-'Asr until the sun sets."*⁸¹

⁷⁹ That is that the sun completely rises above the horizon in the east. Thus the prohibition is when the sun is partially hidden by the horizon in the east [Publishers Note]

⁸⁰ Saheeh Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 2, no. 1811

⁸¹ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 1, no. 560

IS THERE A PARTICULAR TIME AL-ISTIKHAARAH SHOULD BE MADE BEFORE UNDERTAKING THE AFFAIR?



There is no particular time before which one must make *al-Istikhaarah* for a particular affair – but what is upon him is to make *al-Istikhaarah* after feeling a concern and when one has made the intention and resolve to do something, but before actually undertaking the action. This is because of the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"When one of you is concerned about an affair ..."

So if he begins in his intended action, such as, if he proposes or sees someone whom he wishes to marry, and then he remembers *al-Istikhaarah* it is then recommended that he does the *al-Istikhaarah* so long as the affair is not complete.

However if he loses the chance to make *al-Istikhaarah* then he should supplicate for good and he should ask Allaah – the Most High – for good in the affair which he has carried out and to turn away from him its evil.

IS THERE ANY DU'AA WHICH ONE MAKES AFTER
BEING GRANTED THAT WHICH HE HAS ASKED FOR?

Yes! The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"If one of you buys a maid-servant then he should say: 'O Allaah, I ask of You her good and the goodness within her and the goodness that You have made her inclined towards. And I take refuge with You from the evil within her and the evil that You have made her inclined towards', and he should ask for blessings. And if one of you buys a camel then he should touch the top of its hump and supplicate for blessing and say likewise (as the supplication above)."*⁸²

And in another narration:

"If one of you marries a woman or buys a maid-servant, he should touch her forelock and mention Allaah's Name – the Mighty and sublime – and pray for the blessings."

Therefore, it is prescribed to put one's hand on the front of what he has acquired, mentioning Allaah's Name and then praying for blessings with the aforementioned *du'aa*, and likewise on similar matters such as when buying a car and other than that.

⁸² Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 2 No. 2155, ibn Maajah and al-Haakim. Refer to *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 341

DOES ONE RECITE A PARTICULAR SOORAH IN
SALAAT-UL-ISTIKHAARAH?

No! There is no specific portion of the Qur'aan that one has to recite in *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah*. The reciting of certain *soorahs* which some of the scholars have considered good, is rejected. That is because considering something to be good or recommended is a *Shar'iah* ruling which requires proof, whereas in this case, the considering of reciting of particular *soorahs* to be preferable is purely based on intellect and opinion – and thus, is in need of proof. There is nothing established from the *Sunnah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) in this regard – And the best guidance is the guidance of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) and he (ﷺ) did not leave any good action except that he guided us towards it.

WHEN IS THE DU'AA FOR AL-ISTIKHAARAH READ, BEFORE OR AFTER THE SALAAM?

The *du'aa* for *al-Istikhaarah* is performed after completing the two rakaahs particular for it. This is due to the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"...then he should perform two rakaahs other than the obligatory prayers and then say..."

So in this there are two points:

The first, *"... he should pray two rakaahs ..."* meaning that he should complete the *Salaah*.

The second, *"... and then he should say ..."* which denotes that the *Salaah* should directly precede the *du'aa*. Some of the Scholars have said that the *du'aa* should be made before the completion of the *Salaah*. However the apparent meaning of the *hadeeth* that has preceded refutes this – and Allaah knows best.

IF ONE FORGETS TO MAKE THE DU'AA FOR AL-ISTIKHAARAH AFTER PERFORMING THE SALAAH, WHAT SHOULD HE DO?

Du'aa al-Istikhaarah should take place directly after the *Salaah* without any interruption. So if he forgets to make the *du'aa* and he is still sitting and he hasn't broken his *wudoo'*, then he should make the *du'aa* with it. If however, he stood up and walked away, then he should repeat the two rakaahs and then make the *du'aa* after it if he wishes to perform *al-Istikhaarah* upon the prescribed manner.

For in his saying (ﷺ), *"... and then he should say ..."* denotes the order in which it should take place and that it should be directly after the *Salaah*. This is also supported by what is reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim and the wording is from Muslim, on the authority of Aboo Hurayrah *radhiallaahu 'anhu* that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

"The servant still remains in Salaah so long as he is in his place waiting for the Salaah and the Angels say, 'O Allaah forgive him, O Allaah have mercy upon him' until he either goes away or breaks his wudoo'."

Ash-Shawkaanee said:

*"And his (ﷺ)'s saying, "... and then he should say ...", indicates that there is no harm in the delaying of the du'aa of al-Istikhaarah after the Salaah so long as the gap is not long."*⁸³

⁸³ *Nayl al-Awaar* (3/73)

CAN DU'AA AL-ISTIKHAARAH BE MADE AFTER AN OBLIGATORY SALAAH?

The Prophet (ﷺ) said in the *hadeeth* concerning *al-Istikhaarah* "... then you should pray two rakaahs other than the obligatory (Salaah) ..." This contains a proof that the *du'aa* should be after a supererogatory *Salaah* and not an obligatory *Salaah*. Otherwise he would not actualise the intended goal of the *Sunnah* of *al-Istikhaarah*.

Thus if he makes the *du'aa* after an obligatory *Salaah* then his *du'aa* is considered like any other *du'aa* and it would not be, in this situation, according to the *Sunnah* of *al-Istikhaarah*, upon the prescribed manner, and he did not follow the Prophet (ﷺ) with regard to it.

CAN AL-ISTIKHAARAH BE MADE AFTER A SUNNAH SALAAH⁸⁴ OR A SALAAH PERFORMED DUE TO AN EXTERNAL REASON?

The apparent meaning of the *hadeeth* indicates that this is allowed, however there is no doubt that performing *al-Istikhaarah* with an independent *Salaah* is better and more conducive to be acceptable and more likely to be answered – and is further away from differences of opinion.

An-Nawawee, may Allaah have mercy upon him, said:

"The Scholars say: It is recommended to perform *al-Istikhaarah* with an independent *Salaah* and the prescribed *du'aa* and that the *Salaah* should consist of two supererogatory rakaahs. And what is apparent is that it can be achieved by two rakaahs of *Sunnah Salaah* and by the *Salaah* performed upon entering a *Masjid*, and other than it from the supererogatory *Salaah*." ⁸⁵

I say, but with the condition of making the intention before entering the *Salaah*.

Also, al-Haafidh opposed the generalisation of an-Nawawee's statement and said:

"This is how he (an-Nawawee) generalised and it is objectionable." ⁸⁶

⁸⁴ What is intended here are the *sunnah Salaah* that are connected to the five daily prayers [Publishers Note]

⁸⁵ *Al-Adabkaar* (110)

⁸⁶ *Faith-al-Baare* (11/185)

I say; and that which is objectionable is that the supererogatory prayer is of different types according to the reasons for which it is prescribed. So if it is just for an external reason, like entering a *Masjid* or the *Sunnah* after making *wudoo'*, and he makes the intention of *al-Istikhaarah* with it, and thereby he achieves the objective of the reason for which the prayer was prescribed, which with regard to the *Salaah* for entering the mosque, is not sitting down before praying. This is achieved by any *Salaah*, be it obligatory, supererogatory or *Sunnah* etc.

As for combining *al-Istikhaarah* with *Sunnah Salaah* – there is something in the soul that does not accept this.

Al-'Iraaqee said:

*"So if he made the intention of a Sunnah Salaah and also al-Istikhaarah, he may or may not achieve them due to their combination."*⁸⁷

I say, as for other supererogatory prayers like the eclipse prayer and the prayer for rain, we do not see this to be permissible – and Allaah knows best.

⁸⁷ Quoted from the esteemed brother, Dr 'Aasim al-Qariyutee, in his book *Kitaab-ul-Istikhaarah*

IF A SERVANT STARTS A SALAAH OR
FINISHES A SALAAH THEN REMEMBERS HE HAS TO
MAKE AL-ISTIKHAARAH, CAN HE CONSIDER IT
TO BE SALAAT-UL-ISTIKHAARAH?



What seems apparent is that it is not sufficient for the one who begins a supererogatory *Salaah* without making the intention of *al-Istikhaarah* to then change the intention to *al-Istikhaarah* whilst in the *Salaah*. Rather what is required of him is that he completes his *Salaah*, then starts a *Salaah* anew with the intention of *al-Istikhaarah*. This is due to the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ):

"... If one of you is concerned about an affair ..."

So in this is a clear indication that the intention follows the concern and that it should take place before beginning the *Salaah*.

Al-'Iraaqee said:

*"Verily, he (ﷺ) ordered (to make Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah) after the concern about an affair arises so one can say that if he did not intend al-Istikhaarah by his Salaah he has not achieved its correct practice thereby."*⁸⁸

Also al-Haafidh said in *al-Fath*:

*"As for the one to whom a need arises (for which he wants to make al-Istikhaarah) after completing the Salaah, this is far from being correct, since the apparent meaning of the narration shows that the Salaah and the al-Istikhaarah should take place after the intention of an affair is made."*⁸⁹

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ *Fath-ul-Baarree* (11/185)

I say: if he does that and makes the intention after beginning the *Salaah* and then makes the *du'aa*, there is no harm in this. Because at the very least, he is credited with the *du'aa* but in doing so he did not fulfil the *Sunnah* of *al-Istikhaarah* upon its prescribed and complete manner.

CAN ONE MAKE AL-ISTIKHAARAH BY THE DU'AA WITHOUT PERFORMING SALAAH?



There is no doubt that that which is most complete is that the one making *al-Istikhaarah* should do it upon the manner described by the *Shari'ah* comprising of *Salaah*, then the *du'aa*. So if a servant is forced, or his time is constricted and he is not able to perform the two *rakaahs*, then it is permissible for him to make the *du'aa* without the *Salaah* – considering it to be a *du'aa*.

Am-Nawawee said:

*"So if he is unable to make the Salaah he makes al-Istikhaarah with the du'aa."*⁹⁰

This *du'aa* in this situation is considered to be like any other *du'aa* for a need, even if the *du'aa* is one which is combined with a *Salaah*. For verily the Prophet (ﷺ) sought rain with a *du'aa* without performing a *Salaah* and the prescribed practice is to combine the *Salaah* with a *du'aa*.

So the believer should always perform the acts of worship upon their most complete manner which is far away from the doubts and differences, and this is more conducive for the *du'aa* to be answered and the worship to be accepted.

⁹⁰ *al-Istikhaarah* (pg.110-111)

"And it may be that the wisdom in performing the Salaah before the du'aa is that the purpose of the al-Istikhaarah is achieving the good of both this world and the Hereafter. So this requires one to knock at the door of The King – and there is nothing more successful and beneficial to achieve this than Salaah, Him – and in demonstrating one's constant need of Him at the present state and in the future."⁹¹

⁹¹ Ibn Abi Jumrah in *Al-Fath* (11/186)

IS IT NECESSARY TO ADHERE TO THE EXACT TEXT OF THE DU'AA?

Yes. It is necessary to adhere to the exact text of a du'aa which is specific – and du'aa al-Istikhaarah is a du'aa that is specific.

Thus, as reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) taught Baraa ibn 'Aazib *radhiallaahu 'anhu* the du'aa of reclining on one's bed to sleep, and in the du'aa there is:

"I have believed in Your Book which You have sent down, and in Your Prophet whom You have sent ..."

So when Baraa repeated the du'aa to remember it, he said:

"and in Your Messenger whom you have sent ..."

So he (ﷺ) said:

*"No, and in Your Prophet whom You have sent."*⁹²

So this proves that it is necessary to adhere to the exact text of a du'aa in the du'aa that are specific, and Allaah knows best.

As-Nawawee said:

*"Verily, the wordings of the du'aas are maintained exactly to the form established from the Prophet (ﷺ)."*⁹³

⁹² *Sahih al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 8 no. 323*
⁹³ *Al-Majma' (3/495)*

"And it may be that the wisdom in performing the Salaah before the du'aa is that the purpose of the al-Istikhaarah is achieving the good of both this world and the Hereafter. So this requires one to knock at the door of The King – and there is nothing more successful and beneficial to achieve this than Salaah, Him – and in demonstrating one's constant need of Him at the present state and in the future."⁹¹

⁹¹ Ibn Abee Jumrah in *Al-Fatb* (11/186)

IS IT NECESSARY TO ADHERE TO THE EXACT TEXT OF THE DU'AA?

Yes. It is necessary to adhere to the exact text of a *du'aa* which is specific – and *du'aa al-Istikhaarah* is a *du'aa* that is specific.

Thus, as reported by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) taught Baraa ibn 'Aazib *radhiallaahu 'anhu* the *du'aa* of reclining on one's bed to sleep, and in the *du'aa* there is:

"I have believed in Your Book which You have sent down, and in Your Prophet whom You have sent ..."

So when Baraa repeated the *du'aa* to remember it, he said:

"and in Your Messenger whom you have sent ..."

So he (ﷺ) said:

*"No, and in Your Prophet whom You have sent."*⁹²

So this proves that it is necessary to adhere to the exact text of a *du'aa* in the *du'aa* that are specific, and Allaah knows best.

An-Nawawee said:

*"Verily, the wordings of the du'aas are maintained exactly to the form established from the Prophet (ﷺ)."*⁹³

⁹² Saheeh al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 8 no. 323
⁹³ *Al-Majma'* (3/495)

CAN ONE PROMPT THE DU'AA FOR ONE
WHO HAS NOT MEMORISED IT OR CAN IT BE READ
FROM A BOOK?

We do not see any objection in prompting the *du'aa* for one who does not memorise it so that he may make *du'aa* with it – or his reading it from a piece of paper or a book. This is because of the saying of Allaah – the Most High:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

“And Allaah burdens not a person beyond his ability.”⁹⁴

And His saying:

فَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ مَا اسْتَطَعْتُمْ

“And fear Allaah as much as you can.”⁹⁵

The able Muslim should memorise the *du'aa* because in memorising it is a great good. It is rare that the fearful Muslim should pass a time except that he is faced with obstacles or is concerned about a matter – so he makes *al-Istikhaarah* from his Lord in that from his memory.

Perhaps he may be on a journey, or in a place in which he does not have access to the *du'aa* and he is facing a great matter – so he loses this opportunity to make *al-Istikhaarah* from his Creator – and who will then guide him towards the good?

⁹⁴ Soorah al-Baqarah 2:286

⁹⁵ Soorah at-Taghaaboon 64:16

WHAT IS THE RULING OF AL-ISTIKHAARAH?

The wording of the *hadeeth* is in the imperative case which suggests that *al-Istikhaarah* is obligatory but none of the scholars whose statements have reached us have ever said this.

Al-Iraaqee said:

“I have not found one who says that *al-Istikhaarah* is obligatory.”⁹⁶

Also, the saying that it is obligatory is one which presents difficulty and burden which only Allaah truly knows, because the *hadeeth* is general in everything that a Muslim is concerned about. The Muslim today has numerous affairs which he is concerned about – from the buying and selling, the going and returning – so if *al-Istikhaarah* were obligatory, it would result in difficulty and hardship which the Lawgiver has categorically stated as being alleviated from the Believers. Allaah – the Most High – said:

وَمَا جَعَلَ عَلَيْكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ مِنْ حَرَجٍ

“And He has not laid down upon you in the religion any hardship.”⁹⁷

⁹⁶ *Sharh al-Tirmidhee* (2/335) quoted from the book '*kitaab hadeeth Salaat-ul-al-Istikhaarah*' by the esteemed brother, Dr 'Aasim al-Qariyutee, may Allaah protect him, pg.35

⁹⁷ Soorah al-Hajj 22:78

And He said:

لَا يُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا

"Allaah burdens not a person beyond his ability." ⁹⁸

It is not within the capacity of an individual that every time he needs to buy something that he should pray two rakaahs for it and make a *du'aa* – and this is the same for everyone – for he would be placed in great difficulty which is not in accordance with the ease of Islaam.

Consequently the scholars are united on *al-Istikbaarah* being recommended – and Allaah knows best.

However, it is enough to know that in leaving *al-Istikbaarah* there is an immense loss, from the leaving of the *Salaah* and the *du'aa* and the seeking of guidance from one's Lord – and Allaah is the One who guides to the Straight Path.

⁹⁸ Soorah al-Baqarah 2:286

SHOULD ONE RAISE ONE'S HANDS WHILST MAKING DU'AA FOR AL-ISTIKHAARAH?



The general rule with regard to *du'aas* is that one's hands should be raised except if it is proven that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) did not do so in a particular *du'aa*. This is based on general evidences, from amongst them, his (ﷺ)'s saying:

"Verily your Lord is generous, shy. If His servant raises his hands to Him (in supplication), He becomes shy to return them empty and disappointed." ⁹⁹

⁹⁹ Ahmad, Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 no. 1483 and at-Tirmidhee, whose wording it is and al-Albaanee declared it authentic in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no 2070

DOES ONE SAY ANYTHING BEFORE THE DU'AA
AL-ISTIKHAARAH OR AFTER IT FROM
THE PRAISE OF ALLAAH AND PEACE AND BLESSINGS
UPON THE PROPHET (ﷺ)?

Our Shaykh, the renowned scholar Ibn Baaz, is of the opinion that this is permissible, so one should begin, before the *du'aa*, by praising and thanking Allaah – the Most High – with what He is deserving of, and then (after making the *du'aa*) end by sending the peace and blessings upon the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ). This is based on the general evidences which suggest that a *du'aa* should be preceded by praise and glorification of Allaah and it should be followed by sending peace and blessings of Allaah upon the Prophet (ﷺ).

As for our Shaykh the renowned scholar al-Albaanee, then he disagrees and does not allow this. That is because *du'aa al-Istikhaarah* is a specific *du'aa* performed in a specific manner and it is not befitting for a Muslim to add anything before it or after it.

However that which the soul inclines towards, is to abstain from adding anything to the *du'aa*, and thus repelling all doubts, and out of the fear that one is putting something before the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ), and striving to adhere to the text of the *du'aa* – and Allaah knows best.

CAN AL-ISTIKHAARAH BE MADE FOR TWO AFFAIRS
PERFORMING ONE SALAAH AND ONE DU'AA?

If the two affairs are linked together, each of them being connected to the other – then there is no doubt in its permissibility, like marrying a certain woman with the amount of *mahr*, or going into business with a certain person with the amount of money to be invested by them both, or going on a journey with the type of transport.

Thus, an example of his *du'aa* is that he says: "O Allaah, if You know that my travelling to a certain country and by car is good for me in my Religion ..."

Another example: "If You know that my going into partnership with Zaid and with this amount of money is good for me in my Religion ..."

However, if the two affairs are different and there is no connection between the two; then in this case our Scholar, the renowned scholar Ibn Baaz has given the verdict that this is permissible and said: "We do not consider it objectionable."

While our Shaykh, the renowned scholar al-Albaanee disagreed and said: "We do not hold this to be so – and perhaps its proof is the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ): 'If one of you is concerned about an affair ...'"

However that which the soul is inclined to and gives the heart tranquillity, is that every affair should have its own particular *al-istikhaarah* except if one is forced or compelled, or the time is not enough for him, then I hope that there is nothing wrong with that – if Allaah the Most High wills. However if he does it without any excuse, I hope that it suffices him, but what he has left is better and more complete – and Allaah knows best.

IF THE HEART INCLINES TOWARDS
SOMETHING BEFORE AL-ISTIKHAARAH DOES THE
INDIVIDUAL MAKE AL-ISTIKHAARAH
FOR THIS AFFAIR AND WHAT IS THE BENEFIT
OF AL-ISTIKHAARAH IN THIS CASE?

Yes, the Muslim makes *al-Istikhaarah* whether his heart inclines towards something or not. Because *al-Istikhaarah* is seeking ease from Allaah in this affair, or Him turning the servant away from it with His knowledge and His power. So He makes it easy by certain means and He turns it away by others – whether we perceive these means or not.

The purpose of *al-Istikhaarah* is not the expansion of one's heart or its restriction and this is something many Muslims are still confused about.

The benefit in this is clear, for perhaps an individual's heart expands for a certain affair and he considers that in it there is only good, but (in reality) there is nothing in it except that which will cause him harm, the opposite also being true. This is because the nature of an individual is to perceive the outward realities of an affair – and hidden to him are its inner realities. Thus for this reason Allaah has prescribed for him this *al-Istikhaarah*, to make it easy for him the good, which he did not have knowledge of and to turn away from him the evil of which he had no knowledge about. Then, to grant him satisfaction and tranquillity with what Allaah ordains for him if he is a true believer, even if this affair may be outwardly displeasing to him.

IS THE ONE MAKING AL-ISTIKHAARAH
ANSWERED OF ASSURETY?

There is no doubt that *al-Istikhaarah* is on the same level as a *du'aa* and from the *du'aas* are those which are answered and those which are not answered.

Perhaps the *du'aa* is not answered due to an obstacle that prevents it from being answered, as has been previously mentioned. So your duty – O servant of Allaah – is to avoid all the obstacles that prevent a *du'aa* from being answered, adhering to its regulations and its manners so that Allaah answers your *du'aas* and He makes your affair easy for you. For perhaps the affair for which *al-Istikhaarah* is sought is connected to you and will remain with you for the rest of your life – so you lose out on the ability granted by Allaah and lose out on doing that which is most appropriate.

Perhaps the *du'aa* not being answered is due to an affair which Allaah – how Perfect He is – intends as an expiation of sins or as a trial. So there is no duty upon the intelligent servant except patience and pleasure with the judgement of Allaah in all of his affairs.

IS IT POSSIBLE FOR THE ONE MAKING
AL-ISTIKHAARAH TO KNOW WHETHER HE IS
GRANTED HIS REQUEST OR NOT?

Many people complain that they performed *al-Istikhaarah* but ... However they were unmindful of the greatest blessing and favour which Allaah granted them and that was the ability to actually perform this *al-Istikhaarah*. For as we have mentioned before that it contains many benefits with regards worship and pleasure with the decree of Allaah – the Most High – and submitting to His judgements. Especially, after the *al-Istikhaarah*, by not yielding to anxiety, speculation and constant hesitation, which impedes the servant's ability, causing him to surrender himself to destructive delusions and paralysing weaknesses. This is from the greatest of blessings, greater than the acquirement of any worldly or personal benefit.

As for the particular affair for which one is making *al-Istikhaarah*, then its reality cannot be known. This is because the servant may think, based on his outward perception of the matter, that his *du'aa* has not been answered, but in reality he has been heard. This is because an individual's perception of an affair, for the most part, is limited to the outward affairs, heedless of the true realities and what is unseen of the affair.

يَعْلَمُونَ ظَاهِرًا مِّنَ الْحَيَاةِ الدُّنْيَا

"They know but the outer (things) of the life of the world ..." ¹⁰⁰

¹⁰⁰ Soorah ar-Room 30:7

So not every gift which outwardly seems good is in reality good, and not every deprivation is in reality evil.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim said in *al-Fawaaid*:

"So also if the father, who is compassionate towards his son, knowing what is good for him, sees that some bad blood has to be removed from his son for his own good, by incurring severe pain by cutting his skin and cutting his veins. If he knows that his cure lies in cutting off one of his limbs, he does so and does all of this out of compassion and mercy to his son. If he sees that the betterment of his son lies in him withholding something from him, he withholds it from him, and is not lavish towards him because he knows that this causes his corruption and destruction and he often withholds from his son what he desires, for his own good and to protect him, not out of miserliness towards him.

So, if the wisest of all judges, the Most Merciful, the Most Knowledgeable, who is more merciful towards His servants than they are to themselves or their parents are to them, sends down upon them that which they dislike, then it is better for them than Him not sending it upon them, rather it is a benevolence and kindness to them. For if they were left to choose for themselves they would be incapable of knowing, intending or doing that which benefits them, but He – how perfect He is – has taken charge of managing their affairs according to His knowledge, wisdom and mercy, whether they like or dislike it. This being known to those who believe with certainty in Allaah's Names and Attributes, so they do not find fault in any of His laws. This is hidden to those ignorant of Allaah, His Names and Attributes, so they disputed with Him in His regulations and found reproach in His wisdom and did not submit to His decisions, but rather opposed them with their corrupt intelligence, false opinions and unjust behaviour. So they did not know their Lord nor did they achieve that which benefits them. And Allaah is the One who bestows.

Hence when the servant succeeds, by way of this knowledge, he lives in a Paradise in this world before the Hereafter, whose comforts can only be compared to the comforts of Paradise in the Hereafter. Verily he does not cease

to remain pleased with his Lord and this pleasure is the Paradise of this world and a comfort to those who have knowledge. Indeed his soul is content with all that it encounters from the decree which Allaah has chosen for him, and his soul is at peace with His religious laws and this is pleasure with Allaah being the Lord, with Islaam as the way of life and Muhammad (ﷺ) as being the Messenger, and whoever has not achieved this has not tasted *eemaan*." ¹⁰¹

وَعَسَى أَنْ تَكْرَهُوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ خَيْرٌ لَكُمْ وَعَسَى أَنْ تُحِبُّوا شَيْئًا وَهُوَ شَرٌّ لَكُمْ وَاللَّهُ يَعْلَمُ وَأَنْتُمْ لَا تَعْلَمُونَ

"And it may be that you dislike a thing which is good for you and it may be that you like a thing which is bad for you. Allaah knows but you do not know." ¹⁰²

وَلَوْ بَسَطَ اللَّهُ الرِّزْقَ لِعِبَادِهِ لَبَغَوْا فِي الْأَرْضِ

"And if Allaah were to enlarge the provisions for His slaves they would surely rebel in the earth ..." ¹⁰³

Indeed he might have made *al-Istikhaarah* for a business transaction and then loses out in it, and so he presumes that his *du'aa* was not granted.

But perhaps if he did not make *al-Istikhaarah* the problems would be greater and the calamities more serious. So Allaah turned away from him that which he had no knowledge of, and decreed what outwardly seemed to him to be a loss.

¹⁰¹ *Al-Fawaaid* (174)

¹⁰² Soorah al-Baqarah 2:216

¹⁰³ Soorah ash-Shoorah 42:27

Or maybe a servant made *al-Istikhaarah* for marriage, and then what seemed apparent to him was that he wasn't answered, or perhaps he gets divorced, despite making *al-Istikhaarah*, but it may be if he hadn't performed *al-Istikhaarah* there would have been calamities and disasters which Allaah averted from him, by His Bounty and Mercy in answer to the *du'aa* of (the one making) *al-Istikhaarah*.

It is said that a man made *al-Istikhaarah* in a matter of business and lost his money. He was astonished with that, so it was said to him: Indeed in your money was *baraam* and Allaah removed it from you because of your *al-Istikhaarah* in replacement of you being held accountable for it on the Day of Judgement.

It is said that a man requested *Jihad* but when he wasn't granted it he became very sad, so it was said to him: If you had made *Jihad* you would have been captured and taken prisoner and if you had been taken prisoner you would have disbelieved.

It is said that a woman made *al-Istikhaarah* with regard to marriage and after getting married she got a divorce, so she considered it to be wrong, so it was said to her: Had you not made *al-Istikhaarah* you would have married a man who would have been the cause of you falling in to shameful sins or even killing yourself.

Ibn-ul-Qayyim said in *al-Fawaaid*:

"... and also he may hate his wife because of some characteristic in her, but in him keeping her, there is a great benefit for him of which he is unaware, and he may love his wife due to one of her qualities and in him keeping her there is great evil for him that he is unaware of. So a man is as his Creator described him, oppressive and ignorant. Therefore, it is not befitting that he should use what he loves, hates or is inclined towards or turned away from as his gauge or standard for what harms or benefits him. But rather the gauge for that is what Allaah has chosen for him, with His orders and prohibitions.

*Thus, the things most beneficial to him, in an absolute sense is obedience to his Lord, outwardly and inwardly. And the most harmful of things, in an absolute sense is disobedience to Him, outwardly and inwardly."*¹⁰⁴

Therefore beware – O servant of Allaah – from despairing from Allaah's mercy and giving up hope in the *du'aa* being answered, and lack of contentment with the decision of Allaah, for verily this contradicts the perfection of *Tawheed* and tarnishes the completeness of *eemaan*.

Also beware of considering the length of time for the *du'aa* to be answered to be overbearingly long, so much so that you say: 'I made a *du'aa* and it was not answered', in which case you will not be answered; because this is like finding objection to the decree of Allaah and putting yourself before Him – how perfect He is.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"The du'aa of one of you is answered so long as he does not become impatient and say: I made a du'aa to my Lord but He did not answer me."*¹⁰⁵

Perhaps that contained for him an expiation of his sins and purification of his soul, and this has good the likes of which only Allaah is aware of.

To summarise: only Allaah knows the true reality of an affair and the Creator controlling the affairs of His creation is much better for them than their controlling their affairs for themselves. And His Decree is better for them than their conjecture. So what is due upon the servant is to have good opinion of Allaah – the Most High – and to have true certainty in Him and submission to His laws and to nurture the soul

¹⁰⁴ *Al-Fawaaid* (172)

¹⁰⁵ Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 8 No. 352 and Muslim Vol. 4 No. 6595

upon patience with His Decree and pleasure with His Judgements – and He, how Perfect He is – does not decree for His believing servant except that which is good. So if he reaches this level of *eemaan* then this is more beneficial to him than all of the worldly goals or material aspirations.

Anas radhiallaahu 'anhu said that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"I am astonished for the believer. Verily, Allaah the Most High does not decree anything for him except that it is good for him."*¹⁰⁶

Suhaib radhiallaahu 'anhu said that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"Wonderful is the affair of the believer. Verily all of his affairs are good for him and this is only in the case of a believer; if some happiness befalls him he is grateful and so it was good for him, and if he is afflicted with some hardship, he is patient and so it is good for him."*¹⁰⁷

Ibn al-Jawzee said:

"So if it comes and says, 'how many times do you call upon Allaah but you see no answer?' Then say, 'My making du'aa is worship of Allaah and I am sure that the answer will come but perhaps its delay is more suitable for me due to some benefit, and even if it is not achieved, then the worship of Allaah and humility to Him has been achieved.'" ¹⁰⁸ And this is greater in benefit than realising worldly goals.

If a servant feels that his *du'aa* is not answered and his actions have not been blessed, then there is nothing preventing him in revising his actions and taking himself to account and to be upright in his *Deen* and to increase in obedience to his Lord. Rather this is the character of the believer and is most befitting for him.

¹⁰⁶ Ahmad and is found in *Sabeeh al-Jaami* no. 3985

¹⁰⁷ Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 4 No. 7138 and Ahmad

¹⁰⁸ *Sayid al-Khatir* (pg.295)

For perhaps there may be obstacles preventing his *du'aa* from being answered which a servant falls into without knowing or intending it. For example if he is heedless of his Lord, weak in his certainty in Him or if there is in his food something *haraam*, or he oppresses someone or he commits a sin – so he should examine himself and study his condition for verily, in this is a great good for him and his affairs. For verily sins are a barrier in reaching the aims, and heedlessness is a veil before the answering of the *du'aa* and request.

DOES THE ONE MAKING AL-ISTIKHAARAH ALSO SEEK ADVICE FROM SOMEONE, AND WHEN? AND WHAT IS THE BENEFIT OF SEEKING COUNCIL OF PEOPLE (ISTISHAARAH) WITH SEEKING THE GUIDANCE OF ALLAAH (AL-ISTIKHAARAH)?

Yes. The one making *al-Istikhaarah* should also seek help from those whom he knows to be righteous and who can give the appropriate advice and opinion and it makes no difference whether this is before the *al-Istikhaarah* or after it. For there is no contradiction whatsoever between *al-Istikhaarah* and *Istishaarah* (seeking the advice of the people) because *al-Istikhaarah* is from Allaah and *Istishaarah* is from the people.

It was said of old, 'he who makes *al-Istikhaarah* will not be disappointed and he who makes *Istishaarah* will not regret.'

Al-Istikhaarah is an action based on one's *eemaan* whereas *Istishaarah* is an action whereby one seeks the means – so there is no contradiction between the two.

Therefore, in completeness, just as reliance upon Allaah is an action of the heart, so seeking the means is an action of the limbs which Allaah created in order to achieve the goals, and this (combining actions of the heart and actions of the limbs) is what is legislated in the Religion of Islaam. As for abandoning the means – known as *Tawaakul* – then this is something which Islaam rejects and it is not reliance upon Allaah. As for depending upon these means besides Allaah, then this is *Shirk* with regard to these means. Allaah – the Most High – says:

وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ
الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ

"And consult them in the affair. Then once you have taken a decision, put your trust in Allaah, certainly, Allaah loves those who put their trust (in Him)." ¹⁰⁹

So Allaah – the Most High – in this verse, combines both seeking the means which is taking consultation, and the obligation to have reliance upon Allaah, which is an action of *eemaan* and from the complete characteristics of a believer.

This is from Allaah's bounty upon us and from the greatness of Islaam, that it combines both *eemaan* and action and balances between the soul and the matter.

Thus, in the famous *hadeeth* in which a man asked the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) concerning his riding beast; should he tie it and rely upon Allaah, or should he leave it and rely upon Allaah? So the most complete and comprehensive answer, splendid in its clarity was:

"Tie it and rely (upon Allaah)." ¹¹⁰

We know from the *Seerah* of the Prophet (ﷺ) that he used to consult his Companions and even sometimes his wives – so he sought their counsel at the Battle of Uhud and he sought their counsel at the Battle of the Ditch and he also sought their counsel with regard to the prisoners of the Battle of Badr and in many other situations.

¹⁰⁹ Soorah Aali-Imraan 3:159

¹¹⁰ At-Tirmidhee, ibn Khuzaimah and at-Tabaraanee and others and al-'Iraaqee declared it good in *al-Mughni*.

It has been narrated that our Pious Predecessors have said about those who abandoned actions:

'Verily the skies do not rain gold nor silver.'

The people with regard to seeking the advice are as Ma'an ibn Zaidah said:

'Verily we live by the wisdom of other people.'

While some of them said:

'People are of three types:

- one who is like the nourishment which you can never suffice without,
- one who is like the medicine – you need him at certain times,
- one who is likened to a disease – you are never in need of him.'

ARE THERE ANY OTHER WAYS OF MAKING AL-ISTIKHAARAH OTHER THAN WHAT HAS BEEN MENTIONED?

No. There is no other way in the *Shari'ah* to make *al-Istikhaarah* besides what we have mentioned from its *Salaah* and *du'aa*.

Therefore, what is the ruling with regard to the different types of *al-Istikhaarah* which we find the people performing?

That which many of the people do is not the *al-Istikhaarah* prescribed by the *Shari'ah*. Verily, it is from the newly invented matters in the religion, a hindrance and a cause for the people turning away from the *al-Istikhaarah* prescribed by the *Shari'ah*, and the person performing it does not deserve to be answered except if Allaah wills. This affair leads to weakness in *eemaan*, doubt in Allaah's ability and bad thoughts about Allaah – how Perfect He is.

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

“... Beware of the newly invented matters ...”

Ibn 'Abbaas spoke the truth when he said, 'No *Bid'ah* is brought into being except that a *Sunnah* is lost.'

From the new invented types of *al-Istikhaarah*:

1. Opening up the Qur'aan and if he opens it upon an *ayaah* mentioning punishment, he does not do it – and if he opens it upon an *ayaah* of mercy, he does it.

2. While some of them go to a Shaykh ¹¹¹ who spends a night pondering over it, after the *al-Istikhaarah*, and then informs them on the following day as to what he should do or what he should leave alone, based on a dream that he sees, or what he considers, or a deception which he invents.

3. While some of them make *al-Istikhaarah* by way of a rosary bead – so if it ends in an odd number, he continues in his actions but if it ends on an even number he does not do it – or vice versa.

4. Amongst them are those who make *al-Istikhaarah* by colours, omens, voices, words, places, times or days and other than that from the newly invented ways of making *al-Istikhaarah* which Allaah did not send down authority to do.

5. The greatest – in censure – of all of these is that the Muslim should make *al-Istikhaarah* with fortune tellers, magicians or soothsayers.

Know! that every way of making *al-Istikhaarah* that is not in compliance with the description given by the *Shari'ah* is something newly invented and prohibited.

Allaah – the Most High – says:

أَمْ لَهُمْ شُرَكَاءُ شَرَعُوا لَهُمْ مِنَ الدِّينِ مَا لَمْ يَأْذَنْ بِهِ اللَّهُ

“Or have they partners with Allaah, who have instituted for them a Religion which Allaah has not allowed?” ¹¹²

¹¹¹ The word Shaykh here is used to mean someone of high standing and whom the people think to be knowledgeable but in reality that is not the case. This applies to many of the Sufis and other people attempting to imitate the true people of knowledge [Publishers Note]

¹¹² Soorah ash-Shoorah 42:21

So beware – O servant of Allaah – that you legislate for yourself that which Allaah has not given you permission for, nor has the Prophet (ﷺ) done – so in doing so, you corrupt your actions and nullify your reward; and know that the most dangerous of these types of *al-Istikhaarah* are the latter two.

As for the fourth category mentioned above, it is a type of superstition which is a door from the doors of *Shirk* – and we seek refuge with Allaah. It involves the one making *al-Istikhaarah* attaching his affair to other than Allaah and other than the judgement of Allaah and His Decree. It is an action from the actions of *Shirk* and *shaytan* which the people of *jaabiliyah* of old adopted as their religion. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"He is not from amongst us who seeks an evil omen or for whom an evil omen is sought for, or the one who tells the future or for whom the future is told, or for the one who does magic or for whom magic is done."*¹¹³

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Taking Evil omens are Shirk."*¹¹⁴

Meaning, superstition is *Shirk*. And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever is prevented from doing something because of tiyaarah (evil omens) has committed Shirk."*¹¹⁵

As for the last category, which is making *al-Istikhaarah* by fortune-tellers and soothsayers, then it is *Shirk* with Allaah the Great and disbelief in His straight Religion. The Unseen is not known by

¹¹³ at-Tabaraanee and *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 5435

¹¹⁴ Ahmad, Aboo Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 3901, at-Tirmidhee and *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 3960

¹¹⁵ Ahmad and at-Tabaraanee. *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 6264

except Allaah and whoever claims to have knowledge of the Unseen or someone else has knowledge of the Unseen has left the fold of Islam – so either he is asked to repent or he is killed.

By this action of his, he has challenged Allaah – the Most High – who considers that someone from His creation shares in the knowledge of the Unseen which is a lie and a fabrication. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever approaches a fortune-teller or a soothsayer and believes in what he says has verily disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad."*¹¹⁶

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever approaches a fortune-teller and asks him about something, then his Salaah is not answered for forty days and nights."*¹¹⁷

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever approaches a fortune-teller and believes in what he says, or has sexual relations with a menstruating woman or has sexual relations with a woman from her behind (in her rectum), then he has freed himself from what has been sent down upon Muhammad."*¹¹⁸

So race – O servant of Allaah – towards repentance for if these soothsayers and fortune-tellers spoke the truth once, verily they have lied one hundred times. And know, may Allaah have mercy upon you, that those arrows which are used for seeking luck or decision is a

¹¹⁶ Ahmad, al-Haakim and is in *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 5393

¹¹⁷ *Saheeh Muslim* Eng. Trans. Vol. 4 No. 5540

¹¹⁸ Ahmad, Aboo Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 3895 at-Tirmidhee, an-Nasaa'ee and ibn Maajah. *Saheeh al-Jaami'* no. 5943

So beware – O servant of Allaah – that you legislate for yourself that which Allaah has not given you permission for, nor has the Prophet (ﷺ) done – so in doing so, you corrupt your actions and nullify your reward; and know that the most dangerous of these types of *al-Istikhaarah* are the latter two.

As for the fourth category mentioned above, it is a type of superstition which is a door from the doors of *Shirk* – and we seek refuge with Allaah. It involves the one making *al-Istikhaarah* attaching his affair to other than Allaah and other than the judgement of Allaah and His Decree. It is an action from the actions of *Shirk* and *shaytan* which the people of *jaahiliyah* of old adopted as their religion. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"He is not from amongst us who seeks an evil omen or for whom an evil omen is sought for, or the one who tells the future or for whom the future is told, or for the one who does magic or for whom magic is done."*¹¹³

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Taking Evil omens are Shirk."*¹¹⁴

Meaning, superstition is *Shirk*. And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever is prevented from doing something because of tiyaarab (evil omens) has committed Shirk."*¹¹⁵

As for the last category, which is making *al-Istikhaarah* by fortune-tellers and soothsayers, then it is *Shirk* with Allaah the Great and disbelief in His straight Religion. The Unseen is not known by

¹¹³ at-Tabaraanee and *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 5435

¹¹⁴ Ahmad, Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 3901, at-Tirmidhee and *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 3960

¹¹⁵ Ahmad and at-Tabaraanee. *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 6264

anyone except Allaah and whoever claims to have knowledge of the Unseen or someone else has knowledge of the Unseen has left the fold of Islaam – so either he is asked to repent or he is killed.

For by this action of his, he has challenged Allaah – the Most High – and considers that someone from His creation shares in the knowledge of the Unseen which is a lie and a fabrication. The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever approaches a fortune-teller or a soothsayer and believes in what he says has verily disbelieved in what was revealed to Muhammad."*¹¹⁶

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever approaches a fortune-teller and asks him about something, then his Salaah is not answered for forty days and nights."*¹¹⁷

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever approaches a fortune-teller and believes in what he says, or has sexual relations with a menstruating woman or has sexual relations with a woman from her behind (in her rectum), then he has freed himself from what has been sent down upon Muhammad."*¹¹⁸

So race – O servant of Allaah – towards repentance for if these soothsayers and fortune-tellers spoke the truth once, verily they have lied one hundred times. And know, may Allaah have mercy upon you, that those arrows which are used for seeking luck or decision is a

¹¹⁶ Ahmad, al-Haakim and is in *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 5393

¹¹⁷ *Sabeeh Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 4 No. 5540*

¹¹⁸ Ahmad, Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 3895 at-Tirmidhee, an-Nasaa'ee and ibn Maajah. *Sabeeh al-Jaami'* no. 5943

type of *al-Istikhaarah* which the people of *jaabiliyah* (ignorance) adopted for themselves, is a type of *al-Istikhaarah* which Islaam has emphatically prohibited, and Allaah joined it with intoxication and gambling, for He – the Most High – says:

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا إِنَّمَا الْخَمْرُ وَالْمَيْسِرُ وَالْأَنْصَابُ وَالْأَزْلَامُ
رِجْسٌ مِنْ عَمَلِ الشَّيْطَانِ فَاجْتَنِبُوهُ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُفْلِحُونَ

“O you who believe intoxicants, gambling and throwing arrows (for seeking good luck or decision) are an abomination of Satan’s handiwork. So avoid it in order that you may be successful.”¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ Soorah al-Maa’idah 5:90

IS IT PERMISSIBLE TO MAKE AL-ISTIKHAARAH FOR SOMEBODY ELSE?

I initially did not want to mention this question and its answer because the answer requires *ijtihaad*, but then I decided to do so to make clear to the brothers this point. In which case I say, that the origin or the general principle is that *al-Istikhaarah* is not done for somebody else due to the saying of the Prophet (ﷺ), “... if one of you is concerned about an affair ...” So the affair is associated with the person it directly concerns.

However, if the action is something which is shared, or if an individual has a connection even if it is distant to him, like marrying his son or his daughter, or if the affair is particular to someone who himself is not responsible for his actions, like performing an operation for a child, or him travelling, or that which is concerned with his affair, so the correct opinion is that in these circumstances it is allowed. And this is because in the affair, even though it is particular to the child, the father holds a great connection. This is because if the operation does not succeed, it would necessitate an increase of difficulty upon the father – and also, if the son’s marriage does not succeed, it would cause an increase in problems for the father and so on.

So if I am correct, then it is from Allaah alone and if I have made a mistake then it is from me and *shaytan* – and Allaah alone grants the ability.

CLARIFICATION OF SOME OF THE AHADEETH CONCERNING AL-ISTIKHAARAH

The First Hadeeth

"From the prosperity of an individual is his seeking guidance from his Lord and his contentment with what He has ordained, and from the misfortune of an individual is his abandoning seeking guidance from his Lord and his pleasure after what is decreed (for him) comes to pass."

The hadeeth is *hasan li-ghayrihi* (reliable due to other support).

It is collected by Ahmad (1/167), at-Tirmidhee (4/455), al-Haakim (1/517), al-Bazzaar (1/3359) from Khasf, ibn Asaakir (1/232/16) all with similar wording, from the chain of narration of: Muhammed ibn Abee Hameed from Ismaa'eel ibn Muhammed ibn Sa'd ibn Abee Waqaas from his father from his grandfather to the Prophet (ﷺ).

Al-Haakim said: "The chain of narration is authentic (*saheeh*)" and adh-Dhahabee agreed. Al-Haafidh (ibn Hajr) declared it to be *hasan* (reliable) in *Al-Fath* as did al-Uloosi. However this is not the case, for the chains of narration contain Muhammed ibn Abee Hameed, and adh-Dhahabee himself said about him "they declared him to be weak," and ibn 'Adee said: "His weakness is clear from what he narrates and his narrations are similar, but despite his weakness his narrations are written down," meaning his narrations can be used for *Shawaabed* and *Mutaabiyaats*.¹²⁰

¹²⁰ *Shawaabed*: Is a technical *hadeeth* term for a narration that has the same meaning or wording to another narration, but coming from another Companion who relates it from the Prophet *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam*.
Mutaabiyaat: Is a technical *hadeeth* term for a narration that is narrated by another person other than the original narrator, from his teacher or from his teacher's teacher, but coming from the narration of the same Companion [Publishers Note]

Then I came across another narration with Abee Ya'laa (6/2) and al-Bazzaar (1/359) from a different chain of narration; this is narrated from 'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abee Bakr from Muhammed ibn Ismaa'eel.

'Abdur-Rahmaan ibn Abee Bakr is 'Ubaidullaah ibn Abee Maleekah, and he has been declared weak. Ibn 'Adee said: "In summary his narrations are written down," meaning as a *mutaabi*.¹²¹ Thus something such as this is suitable to be used to support the narration of Muhammed ibn Abee Hameed. In which case the narration is graded *Hasan li-ghayrihi*, and Allaah knows best.

This last *hadeeth* was missed by our Shaykh al-Albaanee which is why he declared the *hadeeth* to be weak. This point was also missed by al-'Asqalaanee before him.

What is more strange than this is that al-Mundhiri (1/479) and al-Haythamee both attribute the *hadeeth* to Abee Ya'laa and then declared it weak because of Muhammed ibn Abee Hameed; but Muhammed is not in this chain of narration!

Al-Mundhiri made another mistake in attributing only the first part of the narration as being reported by Ahmad and Abee Ya'laa; whereas they both narrate the narration in full. So Exalted is He who does not forget.

The Second Hadeeth

"He who makes al-Istikhaarah will not be disappointed and he who makes Istisbaarah (seeking advice from people) will not regret. And he who adopts the middle course will not deviate from the correct path."

¹²¹ See footnote 120

Collected by at-Tabaraanee in *al-Awsat* and *as-Sagheer* (2/175), al-Qadaa'ee (7/2) both from 'Abdul-Qudoos ibn 'Abdus-Salaam ibn 'Abdul-Qudoos who narrates from his father who narrates from his (the first narrators) grandfather.

'Abdul-Qudoos (the grandson): Ibn Hibbaan said that he is accused of lying.

Abdul-Qudoos (the grandfather) used to fabricate *hadeeth* and attribute them to reliable narrators. Ibn Hibbaan said: "It is not permissible to write his *hadeeth*."

For this reason our teacher, Shaykh al-Albaanee has declared this *hadeeth* in *Al-Silsilaah*, to be fabricated, as did al-Haafidh in *Al-Fash*, before him (11/184) and said: "Its chain is *waabin jiddan* (very weak)."

However, then I came across another chain of narration for it found with al-Khateeb in his book *at-Tareekh al-Baghdad* (3-54) which is different from the chain of narration in this book, but it does not aid it since it has unknown narrators in it!

The Third Hadeeth

"O Allaah prefer for me and choose for me."

The *hadeeth* is weak (not authentic).

It has been collected by at-Tirmidhee (5/535) no.3511 and he declared it to be weak, al-Marwazi in *Sunan Abee Baker* no.44, ibn as-Sinneer in *Amal al-Yaum wa al-Layla* no.597, Aboo Ya'laa (1/46) and ibn 'Adee (3/236). All of the chains contain Zafal. Ibn Hajr said about him in *at-Taqreeb*: '(He is) weak,' which is why he declared the *hadeeth* to be weak in *al-Fath*.

SUMMARY

If the servant is concerned about an affair or is faced with a worldly problem or intends to do something recommended, or obligatory in which he has a choice, or when two recommended, or obligatory actions conflict with one another – which one should he do? Which one should be put forward? He should pray two rakaahs with the intention of *al-Istikhaarah* in this matter, then he makes a *du'aa* after the *Salaah* with the aforementioned *du'aa*.

Then he seeks counsel from whom he knows to be righteous in his Religion and will give a correct opinion, then he makes a firm resolve upon whatever direction he wishes – without paying attention to the expansion or constriction of his chest and then he puts his trust and reliance upon Allaah as it should be done and then he should do that which comes to him. Then he should be pleased with what is decreed for him, whatever this decree may be; even though this decree may not outwardly please him. For perhaps if he did not make *al-Istikhaarah* the calamities would have been greater and the damage more serious. And reaching Allaah is our goal and He is the One Who guides to its straight path and verily, He is the best of those to seek *al-Istikhaarah* from, the best of whose to seek help from and the best of helpers.

And may the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon our Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and upon his Family and Companions.



THE SECOND PRAYER

Salaat-ut-Taubah

THE PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

THE SECOND PRAYER
Salaat-ut-Taubah
 THE PRAYER OF REPENTANCE

Because man is weak to resolve,

وَخَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ضَعِيفًا

"... And Man was created weak." 122

heedless, fluctuating between the evil of the *shayaateen* (devils) and the characteristics of the pure angels. So sometimes he slips so low that you consider him to be like a *shaytan* (devil), not distinguishing the lawful from the unlawful, wandering aimlessly, rushing to answer his passions, a slave of his desires. He hurls himself towards disobedience like a wild savage beast pouncing upon its prey, not taking care of sacredness nor honour, morality nor nobility. As if there is no Lord watching over him, no Creator who will take him to account, no punishment in front of him, feeling secure against the plot of Allaah and His punishment.

أَفَأَمِنُوا مَكْرَ اللَّهِ فَلَا يَأْمَنُ مَكْرَ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْخَاسِرُونَ

"Do they feel secure against the plot of Allaah. None feels secure from the plot of Allaah except the people who are lost." 123

Who is more ignorant and heedless than this individual?

122 Soorah an-Nisaa 4:28
 123 Soorah al-A'raaf 7:99

... sometimes he awakens (to obedience) so much so that you think him to be from the angels close to Allaah. He is constant with his prayers, constantly in obedience with his Lord. He distinguishes between the lawful and unlawful, feeling that he is accountable.

وَلَا تَحْسَبَنَّ اللَّهَ غَافِلًا عَمَّا يَعْمَلُ الظَّالِمُونَ إِنَّمَا يُؤَخَّرُهُمْ يَوْمَ تَشْخَصُ فِيهِ الْأَبْصَارُ * مُهْطِعِينَ مُقْنِعِي رُءُوسِهِمْ لَا يَرْتَدُّ إِلَيْهِمْ طَرْفُهُمْ وَأَفْئَدَتُهُمْ هَوَاءٌ

"Consider not that Allaah is unaware of what the wrong-doers do, but He gives them respite up to a Day when the eyes will stare in horror. Hastening forward with necks out-stretched, their heads raised up (towards the sky), their gaze returning not towards them and their hearts empty (out of extreme fear)." 124

How can he not take this Day into careful consideration and not tremble upon mention of its horror. In it the evil doers will be tied in chains and their clothes will be made of fire and cut from tar and the fire will cover them from every direction.

For Allaah is Merciful to His servants, Benevolent to His creation, overlooking their (wrong) actions. Knowledgeable about their weaknesses, He loves for them uprightness and guidance and He hates for them crookedness and corruption.

يُرِيدُ اللَّهُ لِيُذْهِبَ عَنْكُمُ الرِّيبَ وَيَهْدِيَكُمْ سَبِيلَ الذِّينِ مَنِ الذِّينِ مِنْ قَبْلِكُمْ وَتُوبَ عَلَيْكُمْ وَاللَّهُ عَلِيمٌ حَكِيمٌ

124 Soorah al-Ibraheem 14:42-43

"Allaah wishes to make clear to you and to show the ways of those before you and accept your repentance and Allaah is All-Knower, All Wise." ¹²⁵

He prescribed for them the way of returning back and opened for them the door of repentance. By this they wash away their mistakes and clean themselves of their misdeeds. By it Allaah expiates their sins for them and wipes away their evil deeds.

So who is more merciful than the Lord and who is more kind than the Creator?

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا تَوْبُوا إِلَى اللَّهِ تَوْبَةً نَصُوحًا عَسَىٰ رَبُّكُمْ أَن يُكَفِّرَ عَنْكُمْ سَيِّئَاتِكُمْ

"O you who believe! Turn to Allaah with sincere repentance! It may be that your Lord will remit from you your sins ..." ¹²⁶

So race – O servant of Allaah – towards repentance and hurry in pursuit of atonement! Because remaining upon disobedience is destruction and persistence upon it leads to immorality, and immense ignorance of Allaah – how Perfect He is – and belittling His orders.

Whoever truly perceives the greatness of Allaah – the Most High – perceives that He truly deserves obedience and will never disobey Him.

وَهُوَ الْقَاهِرُ فَوْقَ عِبَادِهِ

"And He is the Irresistible above His slaves." ¹²⁷

¹²⁵ Soorah an-Nisaa 4:26

¹²⁶ Soorah at-Tahreem 66:8

¹²⁷ Soorah al-An'aam 6:18

وَمَا قَدَرُوا اللَّهَ حَقَّ قَدْرِهِ وَالْأَرْضُ جَمِيعًا قَبْضَتُهُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَالسَّمَاوَاتُ مَطْوِيَّاتٌ بِيَمِينِهِ سُبْحَانَهُ وَتَعَالَىٰ عَمَّا يُشْرِكُونَ

"They made not just estimate of Allaah as is due to Him. And on the Day of Resurrection the whole earth will be grasped by His Hand and the Heavens will be rolled up in His right Hand." ¹²⁸

Whoever feels the far-reaching power of Allaah, His Sight which sees over all things, His Hearing which hears all things and His Knowledge which encompasses all things – this servant would never disobey his Lord.

هُوَ الْأَوَّلُ وَالْآخِرُ وَالظَّاهِرُ وَالْبَاطِنُ وَهُوَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۚ هُوَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ السَّمَاوَاتِ وَالْأَرْضَ فِي سِتَّةِ أَيَّامٍ ثُمَّ اسْتَوَىٰ عَلَى الْعَرْشِ يَعْلَمُ مَا يَلِجُ فِي الْأَرْضِ وَمَا يَخْرُجُ مِنْهَا وَمَا يَنْزِلُ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ وَمَا يَعْرُجُ فِيهَا وَهُوَ مَعَكُمْ أَيْنَ مَا كُنْتُمْ وَاللَّهُ بِمَا تَعْمَلُونَ بَصِيرٌ

"He is the First and the Last, the Most High and the Most Near and He is the All-Knower of everything. He it is who created the heavens and earth in six days and was high above the Throne. He knows what goes into the earth and what goes out from it, what descends from the heaven and what ascends thereto. And He is with you (by His Knowledge) wheresoever you may be and Allaah is the All-Seer of what you do." ¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Soorah az-Zumar 39:67

¹²⁹ Soorah al-Hadeed 57:3-4

How beautiful is the saying of a poet:

*'O the One who sees even the fly spreading its wings in the
pitch black darkness of the night,
Who observes the veins in the throat, penetrating even the
marrow within the bones,
Who sees the darkness of His servants' sins from above the
Throne belonging to The Master,
Bestow upon me repentance which will wipe them away
That which was committed by me from the very first time.'*

If the servant were to know what Allaah – the Exalted – has promised for the disobedient ones from the painful punishment and continuous suffering, then no servant would ever sin. Allaah – the Most High – says:

يَوْمَ يُسْحَبُونَ فِي النَّارِ عَلَى وُجُوهِهِمْ ذُقُوا مَسَّ سَقَرٍ

"The Day they will be dragged in the Fire on their faces (and it would be said to them): Taste you the touch of Hell." ¹³⁰

And He – the Most High – says:

يَوْمَئِذٍ يَوَدُّ الَّذِينَ كَفَرُوا وَعَصَوُوا الرَّسُولَ لَوْ تُسَوَّى بِهِمُ الْأَرْضُ
وَلَا يَكْتُمُونَ اللَّهَ حَدِيثًا

"On that Day, those who disbelieved and disobeyed the Messenger (Muhammad) will wish that they were buried in the earth, but they will never be able to hide a single fact from Allaah." ¹³¹

¹³⁰ Soorah al-Qamar 54:48

¹³¹ Soorah an-Nisaa 4:42

And He says:

وَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ يَوْمَئِذٍ مُّقْرَّنِينَ فِي الْأَصْفَادِ

"And you will see the *mujrimoon* (criminals, evil doers) on that Day bound in fetters." ¹³²

So who is able to bear this fiercely blazing fire?

Verily the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"This fire of yours which is kindled by the sons of Aadam is one seventieth (of the strength) from the Fire of Hell." ¹³³

So race – O servant of Allaah – to repentance before your repentance will be of no avail to you and you will be surprised by the suddenness of your death – so you will bite your fingers out of regret but by that time, regret will be of no avail and thus say if death arrives to you:

رَبِّ ارْجِعُونِ ۖ لَعَلِّي أَعْمَلُ صَالِحًا فِيمَا تَرَكْتُ

"My Lord! Send me back. So that I may do good in that which I have left behind." ¹³⁴

So it will be said:

كَلَّا إِنَّهَا كَلِمَةٌ هُوَ قَائِلُهَا وَمِنْ وَرَائِهِمْ بَرْزَخٌ إِلَى يَوْمِ يُبْعَثُونَ

¹³² Soorah al-Ibraheem 14:49

¹³³ Saheeh al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 4 No. 6811

¹³⁴ Soorah al-Mu'minoon 23:99-100

"No. It is but a word that he speaks. And behind them is a *barzakh* (barrier) until the Day when they will be resurrected."¹³⁵

أَنْ تَقُولَ نَفْسٌ يَأْسِرْتَا عَلَيَّ مَا فَرَطْتُ فِي جَنْبِ اللَّهِ وَإِنْ كُنْتُ
لَمِنَ السَّاجِرِينَ ﴿١٣٥﴾ أَوْ تَقُولَ لَوْ أَنَّ اللَّهَ هَدَانِي لَكُنْتُ مِنَ
الْمُتَّقِينَ ﴿١٣٦﴾ أَوْ تَقُولَ حِينَ تَرَى الْعَذَابَ لَوْ أَنَّ لِي كَرَّةً فَأَكُونَ
مِنَ الْمُحْسِنِينَ ﴿١٣٧﴾ بَلَى قَدْ جَاءَتْكَ آيَاتِي فَكَذَّبْتَ بِهَا وَاسْتَكْبَرْتَ
وَكُنْتَ مِنَ الْكَافِرِينَ ﴿١٣٨﴾ وَيَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ تَرَى الَّذِينَ كَذَبُوا عَلَى اللَّهِ
وُجُوهُهُمْ مُسْوَدَّةٌ أَلَيْسَ فِي جَهَنَّمَ مَثْوًى لِّلْمُتَكَبِّرِينَ

"Lest the soul will (then) say: Ah! Woe to me in that I neglected (my duty) towards Allaah and was amongst those who mocked. Or lest it will say: If only Allaah had guided me, I would certainly have been amongst the righteous. Or lest it will say: when it actually sees the torment: If only I had another chance, I will certainly be amongst those who do good. (The reply will be) say! But there came to you My signs and you rejected them and you were proud and were amongst the disbelievers and on the Day of Judgement you will see those who lied against Allaah – their faces will be turned black. Is there not in Hell an abode for the arrogant. But Allaah will deliver the righteous to their place of salvation, no evil will touch them nor will they grieve."¹³⁶

¹³⁵ Soorah al-Mu'minoon 23:100

¹³⁶ Soorah az-Zumar 39:56-60

"O servant of Allaah – prepare for repentance and it will raise you up above the sins. For it is no more than a few days and before you know it you will be in front of your Master.

قَالَ كَمْ لَبِثْتُمْ فِي الْأَرْضِ عَدَدَ سِنِينَ

"He (Allaah) will say: What number of years did you stay on earth? They will say: We stayed a day or a part of a day, ask of those who keep account."¹³⁷

Rather it is a few hours and before you know it, you are in front of al-Jabbaar (the Compeller) of the heavens and the earth.

كَأَنَّهُمْ يَوْمَ يَرَوْنَهَا لَمْ يَلْبُثُوا إِلَّا عَشِيَّةً أَوْ ضُحَاهَا

"The day they see it (it will be) as if they had not tarried (in this world) except an afternoon or a morning."¹³⁸

From the greatest of all affairs which stand between the servant and him repenting and returning to his Lord is the servant thinking that Allaah – the Majestic – will not accept his *Tawbah* (repentance) and He will not forgive his errors because of the numerous times that he repented and then relapsed – and because of the greatness of his sins and his decline – and all of this is just whispering of the *shaytaan* to make a barrier between the servant and his repentance. For if the servant, being truthful in his repentance knew the greatness of his Lord's forgiveness and his Lord's extreme happiness upon the repentance of His servant, the sinner would race towards repentance even if his sins were to reach the clouds in the sky.

¹³⁷ Soorah al-Mu'minoon 23:112

¹³⁸ Soorah an-Nazi'at 79:46

Abee Hamza Anas ibn Maalik al-Ansaaree *radbiallaahu 'anhu* said that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

"Allaah is more pleased with the repentance of His servant than one of you who falls off his camel and loses it in a barren desert land." ¹³⁹

and in the narration in Muslim:

"Allaah is more pleased with the repentance of a servant as he turns towards Him in repentance than one amongst you who is upon his camel in a waterless desert land and upon that camel are his provisions of food and drink and he loses it – and he, having lost all hope in recovering it, lies down in the shade of a tree, despondent about seeing his camel again, then suddenly he finds his camel standing before him, he takes hold of the camel's nose-string and out of boundless joy says: 'O Lord! You are my servant and I am Your Lord.' He makes a mistake out of extreme pleasure." ¹⁴⁰

Thus, there is no duty upon you – O servant of Allaah – except that you should make Allaah happy with your repentance and bring happiness to your own soul by its repenting to its Lord and by standing upright before its Originator.

Know! – O Servant of Allaah – that Allaah the Exalted accepts the sincere repentance from His servant even if he breaks his repentance after repentance, and repeats sin after sin. So most fortunate is he whose soul is happy with repentance after which there is no sin and miserable is he who despairs of the mercy of his Lord and he persists in his sin and he continues in his transgression.

¹³⁹ al-Bukharee Eng. Trans. Vol. 8 No. 321 and Muslim Eng. Tarns. Vol. 4 No. 6611

¹⁴⁰ Saheeh Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 4 No. 6618

لَا يَيْئَسُ مِنْ رَوْحِ اللَّهِ إِلَّا الْقَوْمُ الْكَافِرُونَ

"Certainly none despairs of Allaah's mercy except the people who disbelieve." ¹⁴¹

For if there was nothing for those seeking repentance except forgiveness of the sins, it would be enough of a great blessing and kind benevolence, mercy and compassion.

How? when indeed Allaah the Exalted, has promised more than just forgiveness and overlooking, and it is the replacing of evil deeds with good deeds and raising the ranks of those who seek repentance.

يُضَاعَفْ لَهُ الْعَذَابُ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ وَيَخْلُدْ فِيهِ مُهَانًا ۖ إِلَّا مَنْ تَابَ
وَأَمَنَ وَعَمِلَ عَمَلًا صَالِحًا فَأُولَٰئِكَ يُبَدِّلُ اللَّهُ سَيِّئَاتِهِمْ حَسَنَاتٍ
وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

"The torment will be doubled to him on the Day of Resurrection, and he will abide therein in disgrace. Except those who repent and believe and do righteous deeds, for those, Allaah will change their sins into good deeds, and Allaah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful." ¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Soorah Yusuf 12:87

¹⁴² Soorah al-Furqaan 25:69-70

THE CONDITIONS OF REPENTANCE

To Allaah is all praise Who opened the door of His repentance to its fighters.

He does not refuse the one seeking repentance nor does He turn away the one seeking forgiveness.

He did not make a veil upon it – He prevents whom He wishes and accepts whom He wishes.

So how Perfect He is, and how Merciful He is to His servants; and how forbearing He is over His creation!

They oppose and they disobey Him. Rather they disbelieve in Him and they insult and Abuse Him and despite that, He provides sustenance for them and He feeds them.

Thus when one of them repents to Him, He forgives him whatever he may have done in the past and whatever he may have reached. For if He did not have mercy upon us and accept our repentance we would surely have been from the losers, and true loss if what Allaah has informed us about in His saying:

قُلْ إِنَّ الْخَاسِرِينَ الَّذِينَ خَسِرُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ وَأَهْلِيَهُمْ يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ

“Say: The losers are those who will lose themselves and their families on the Day of Resurrection.”¹⁴³

¹⁴³ Soorah az-Zumar 39:15

That is, by Allaah, the manifest loss.

The conditions of *Tawbah* are as follows:

- Cessation of the sin,
- Regret and remorse of the heart,
- Firm resolve not to return to the sin,
- Returning the right of the oppressed, in that which is particular to the rights of man.

Thus, whoever makes a resolve to repent and seeks forgiveness, then he should cease committing the sin and abandon his habit, and have true regret of what he has done with regard to Allaah's rights from violating His prohibitions and transgressing His limits, and he should make a firm resolve with his heart to never return to it.

If the sin is connected to other individuals, then he should return the wrong to its rightful owner if it is a material wrong, such as taking somebody's wealth or violating a right. But if he is not able to do so, then he should give its equivalent value of wealth in charity and seek the forgiveness for that person plentifully. However, if the wrong committed against someone was not material, such as backbiting or tale-carrying then he should ask for his pardon, and if he is unable to, then he should seek forgiveness for him and make *du'aa* for him plentifully.

THREE THINGS WHICH THE REPENTANT SERVANT MUST DO AND THREE WHICH HE MUST BE AWARE OF

As for the three things which the repentant should hasten towards so that Allaah may accept his repentance and forgive him for his sins are:

- Performing *Salaat-ut-Tawbah*.
- Seeking forgiveness plentifully.
- Racing towards obedience and increasing in righteous deeds.

As for *Salaat-ut-Tawbah*, then it is a pledge of your repentance and the key to your good and the closing of your sins and expiation of your mistakes.

As for seeking forgiveness plentifully, then verily Allaah – the Most High – has said:

فَقُلْتُ اسْتَغْفِرُوا رَبَّكُمْ إِنَّهُ كَانَ غَفَّارًا

“So I said (to them): Ask forgiveness from your Lord, verily He is Oft-Forgiving.”¹⁴⁴

¹⁴⁴ Soorah Nuh 71:10

And He – the Most High – has said:

وَمَنْ يَعْمَلْ سُوءًا أَوْ يَظْلِمْ نَفْسَهُ ثُمَّ يَسْتَغْفِرِ اللَّهَ يَجِدِ اللَّهَ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا

“And whoever does evil or wrongs himself but afterwards seeks Allaah’s forgiveness, he will find Allaah Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful.”¹⁴⁵

and he (ﷺ) said:

“And he who loves to be pleased by his record (of deeds), then let him seek forgiveness plentifully.”¹⁴⁶

Ibn ‘Umar, the son of ‘Umar ibn ‘Abdul ‘Azeez saw his father ‘Umar in his dream after his death, so he asked him:

“Which of your actions are best?” So he replied: “I have not seen anything better than Istighfaar (the seeking of forgiveness).”

As for racing towards righteous actions, then this is due to the saying of Allaah – the Most High:

وَإِنِّي لَغَفَّارٌ لِمَنْ تَابَ وَآمَنَ وَعَمِلَ صَالِحًا ثُمَّ اهْتَدَى

“And verily I am indeed forgiving to him who repents, believes and does righteous deeds and then remains constant in doing them.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁵ Soorah an-Nisaa 4:110

¹⁴⁶ Saheeh- al-Jaami’ no. 5955

¹⁴⁷ Soorah Ta-Ha 20:82

Thus, verily, Allaah has connected forgiveness with repentance and *eemaan* with righteous actions.

As for the three things which are obligatory to avoid for the Muslim who has repented to Allaah, they are:

- Thinking about the sin
- Visiting the place in which the sin was committed
- Keeping company with evil friends

For thinking and pondering over sins, even if it is just thinking about it, belittles the sin and makes the sin seem comfortable and easy.

This is a very vast door from the doors of *shaytan*, when the Muslim starts to think about the sin, believing that he has done no wrong because he did not do anything – but thinking about it continuously and picturing it elaborately makes the sin seem easy and disobedience becomes usual.

Likewise, visiting the place where the sin was committed is a trap for the individual and leads to slipping back into the sin.

How many people return to the place of disobedience, whilst not intending to return to the sin, but gradually revert to it whilst not even realising it?

Therefore he falls to its lure and is stained by its corruption, so how can he be saved except by a rope from Allaah and then severance from this corrupt environment.

The Prophet of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever bovers around a forbidden area will be on the verge of falling into it."*¹⁴⁸

As for keeping the company of evil people, then it is the key of self-corruption, and the shutting off of the good. I have not seen anything more corrupting to the religion of an individual, more quick to abuse, than evil company. They slowly, gradually, lead you into disobedience and drag you towards it in the most astonishing of ways and making its path easy, smoothening its roads for you. But if you fall into its abyss, they leave you groping in its darkness, wandering in its smog. Its claws have seized you, and its love has taken root in your heart and it cannot be removed from you except by Allaah's favour and sincere repentance, abstaining from the place of disobedience and abandoning evil company. So sufficient for us is what he (ﷺ) guided us towards.

Aboo Musaa al-Asha'ree *radhiallaahu 'anhu* said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Verily the example of a good companion and a bad companion is like that of a seller of musk and the one who works the blacksmiths' bellows. So as for the seller of musk then either he will grant you some, or you buy some from him, or at least you enjoy a pleasant smell from him. As for the one who works the blacksmith's bellows then either he will burn your clothes or you will get an offensive odour from him."*¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 49 and Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 3882
¹⁴⁹ al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 314

Thus, verily, Allaah has connected forgiveness with repentance and *eemaan* with righteous actions.

As for the three things which are obligatory to avoid for the Muslim who has repented to Allaah, they are:

- Thinking about the sin
- Visiting the place in which the sin was committed
- Keeping company with evil friends

For thinking and pondering over sins, even if it is just thinking about it, belittles the sin and makes the sin seem comfortable and easy.

This is a very vast door from the doors of *shaytan*, when the Muslim starts to think about the sin, believing that he has done no wrong because he did not do anything – but thinking about it continuously and picturing it elaborately makes the sin seem easy and disobedience becomes usual.

Likewise, visiting the place where the sin was committed is a trap for the individual and leads to slipping back into the sin.

How many people return to the place of disobedience, whilst not intending to return to the sin, but gradually revert to it whilst not even realising it?

Therefore he falls to its lure and is stained by its corruption, so how can he be saved except by a rope from Allaah and then severance from this corrupt environment.

The Prophet of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever hovers around a forbidden area will be on the verge of falling into it."*¹⁴⁸

As for keeping the company of evil people, then it is the key of evil itself, and the shutting off of the good. I have not seen anything more corrupting to the religion of an individual, more quick to abusement, than evil company. They slowly, gradually, lead you into disobedience and drag you towards it in the most astonishing of ways and making its path easy, smoothening its roads for you. But if you fall into its abyss, they leave you groping in its darkness, wandering in its smog. Its claws have seized you, and its love has taken root in your heart and it cannot be removed from you except by Allaah's favour and sincere repentance, abstaining from the place of disobedience and abandoning evil company. So sufficient for us is what he (ﷺ) guided us towards.

Aboo Musaa al-Asha'ree *radhiallaahu 'anhu* said that the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Verily the example of a good companion and a bad companion is like that of a seller of musk and the one who works the blacksmiths' bellows. So as for the seller of musk then either he will grant you some, or you buy some from him, or at least you enjoy a pleasant smell from him. As for the one who works the blacksmith's bellows then either he will burn your clothes or you will get an offensive odour from him."*¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁸ al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 49 and Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 3882

¹⁴⁹ al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 3 No. 314

HOW IS SALAAT-UT-TAWBAH PERFORMED?

If a servant commits a sin he should hasten to perform *wudoo* properly, then he should pray two rakaahs, beautifying them, being mindful of Allaah in them; so that they may be an expiation of his sin and a purification of his soul.

'Alee radbiallaahu 'anhu who said that Aboo Bakr radbiallaahu 'anhu told him that he heard the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) say:

*"There is no servant who commits a sin and then he purifies himself (performs wudoo') and then prays two rakaahs and then seeks forgiveness of Allaah except that Allaah forgives him."*¹⁵⁰

Then he read this verse:

وَالَّذِينَ إِذَا فَعَلُوا فَاحِشَةً أَوْ ظَلَمُوا أَنْفُسَهُمْ ذَكَرُوا اللَّهَ فَاسْتَغْفَرُوا
لذُنُوبِهِمْ وَمَنْ يَغْفِرِ الذُّنُوبَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَلَمْ يُصِرُّوا عَلَى مَا فَعَلُوا
وَهُمْ يَعْلَمُونَ

"And those who, when they have committed illegal sexual intercourse or wronged themselves with evil, remember Allaah and ask forgiveness for their sins, and who can forgive sins except Allaah? And do not persist knowingly in what (wrong) they have done."¹⁵¹

¹⁵⁰ Ahmad, Aboo Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 1516 at-Tirmidhee, an-Nasaa'ee, ibn Majah and others and is in *Saheeh al-Jaami* no. 5738
¹⁵¹ Soorah Aali Imraan 3:135

And the Prophet (ﷺ) said:

*"Whoever performs wudoo' like this wudoo' of mine, and then prays two rakaahs during which he does not think of anything else (not related to the prayer) then his past sins will be forgiven."*¹⁵²

Therefore the two above mentioned *hadeeth* contain the two conditions which must be fulfilled for *Salaat-ut-Tawbah* to be accepted and they are:

First: Completeness and perfection of the *wudoo*', and that it should be in accordance with the *wudoo*' of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ), and this has a great indication, encouraging the seeking of knowledge so as to know the *wudoo*' of the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ).

Second: The two rakaahs should be sincerely for the sake of Allaah, not speaking to himself in his prayer nor allowing *shaytan* to whisper to him in it, nor thinking of anything in his prayer other than that of worship and turning towards his Lord and repentance to Him.

Finally: al-Muzni who is Aboo Ibraaheem Ismaa'eel ibn Yahya said: "I entered upon ash-Shaafi'ee during his illness which resulted in his death, so I said to him: 'What is your condition?' He replied: "I am journeying from this world, and departing from my brothers, drinking from the cup of death, and upon Allaah – Exalted in His remembrance – arriving. And no! By Allaah, I do not know if my soul is travelling towards Paradise or the Fire!" Then he started to weep, and he said:¹⁵³

¹⁵² al-Bukhaaree Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 161 and Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 436
¹⁵³ In translating these lines of poetry I have exercised a certain degree of freedom in order to preserve the emotive content as well as making it readable in the English language [Translator Note]

*In You, the Creator, I raise my longing,
 And even if I am, O possessor of kindness and generosity,
 an evildoer, a criminal,
 When my heart became constricted and my paths
 became narrow,
 I took my hope in Your pardon and forgiveness as an
 opening and an escape,
 My sins seemed very great to me but when I compared
 them to Your forgiveness,
 I found Your forgiveness to be greater,
 You are and still remain the only One who can
 forgive sins,
 You grant and forgive out of Your benevolence and
 generosity, Perhaps the One who is the source of all goodness will
 forgive and overlook my mistakes,
 And will hide the sins and burden that I accumulated,
 My sins seemed very great to me, so I turned (to You)
 in humility,
 Were it not for my contentment in you,
 I wouldn't O my Lord, have seen any comfort at all,
 So if You forgive me, You would have forgiven a sinner,
 A rebellious, oppressive tyrant still sinning,
 So my crime is very great, past and present,
 But Your forgiveness that embraces Your servant is
 greater and higher,
 So whomsoever holds fast to Allaah is truly saved from mankind,
 And whomsoever's hopes are in Him, will be far removed
 from any regrets.*¹⁵⁴

¹⁵⁴ Diwaan al-Shaafi'ee

وَهُوَ الَّذِي يَقْبَلُ التَّوْبَةَ عَنْ عِبَادِهِ وَيَعْفُو عَنِ السَّيِّئَاتِ وَيَعْلَمُ مَا تَفْعَلُونَ

*"And He it is Who accepts repentance from His slaves,
 and forgives sins, and He knows what you do."*¹⁵⁵

O Allaah accept our repentance, overlook our sins and accept from us
 our good deeds, verily You are the only One worthy of being asked
 and are able to answer.

May the peace and blessings of Allaah be upon our Prophet
 Muhammad (ﷺ) his Family and his Companions.

¹⁵⁵ Soorah ash-Shoorah 42:25



THE THIRD PRAYER

Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh

THE PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

THE THIRD PRAYER
Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh
 THE PRAYER FOR FORGIVENESS

Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh And The Saying Of Some Scholars Regarding It

There are various opinions of the honourable scholars with regard to the name of this blessed *Salaab*. Some of them called it *Salaat-ut-Tasaabeeh*. Others called it *Salaat-ut-Tawbah*. Yet another group called it *Salaat-ul-Ghufraan* (prayer for forgiveness).

Whatever its name may be, it refers to one prayer and its purpose is one. Verily it is a great prayer for expiating the sins, forgiveness for the sins and mistakes. It is a cleansing for whoever wants to be cleansed, success for whomsoever seeks salvation.

The renowned scholar 'Abdul 'Azeez ibn Abee Rawaad ¹⁵⁶ said:

"Whoever desires Paradise then he should take to Salaat-ut-Tasaabeeh."

Aboo 'Uthmaan Sa'eed ibn Ismaa'eel Al-Heeri ¹⁵⁷ said:

"I have not seen anything for (removal of) calamities and afflictions like Salaat-ut-Tasaabeeh."

¹⁵⁶ He is 'Abdul 'Azeez ibn Maimoon al-Azdi, one of the great Imaams and worshippers. Ibn al-Mubaarak said: "He was from those who used to worship Allaah the most." He died 159H, *As-Seer* (184-7)

¹⁵⁷ He is the Imaam and admonisher an-NisAboori (220-298H), *As-Seer* (14-62)

As-Subki ¹⁵⁸ said:

"Indeed I have spoken at length about this because of the objection of at-Nawawee on it and the reliance of the people of this era on him. Thus I was afraid the people would be deceived by that. Thus it is befitting that one endeavours to do it."

The one who hears of the great reward contained in it and then is heedless of it, is no more than someone who is carefree with regard to his *deen*, not plentiful in doing righteous actions and he should not be considered from the people of resolve – And we ask Allaah for safety.

Ibn 'Aabideen said:

"The hadeeth pertaining to it is reliable because of its many chains, and those who consider it weak, then it is mere conjecture from them. It contains in it a reward which should not be abandoned, and based on this, some of the mubaqqiqeen ¹⁵⁹ say, "No-one hears of its great blessing and leaves it except that he is negligent with regard to his religion." ¹⁶⁰

Al-Haafidh ibn Hajr said in his *Amaalee*:

"Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak used to pray it and it has been handed down from the righteous." ¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁸ He is Taajuddin Aboo al-Nasr 'Abdul-Wahhaab ibn 'Alee as-Subki, he died in the year 771H. He said this in his book *Ar-Tasbeeh Lee ASalaabit-Tasbeeh*.

¹⁵⁹ Refer to footnote no. 77

¹⁶⁰ In his *al-Haabiyyah* (2/27)

¹⁶¹ *Nataij-ul-Afqaar* quoted from *Al-Aathaar al-Marfu'ah* (pg.131)

Thus, in this, is a strengthening of the *hadeeth* and the earliest person from whom is reported this action is Aboo Jawzah Aws ibn 'Abdullaah al-Basree.¹⁶²

Many of the scholars have stated it as being recommended, from the *Shaafi'ee* like ash-Shaykh Abee Haamid and al-Muhaamalee and al-Juwaynee and his father Imaam al-Harmain and al-Ghazaalee and al-Qaadi Hussain and al-Baghawee and al-Matulee and Zahir ibn Ahmad ar-Radee and Rafi'ee in *ar-Rawdah* and then he mentions the affirmation of Imaam Ahmad and the mistake of those who declared it to be fabricated.

¹⁶² Aboo Jawzah is Aws ibn 'Abdullah ar-Rabi'ee, one of the major *tabi'een* and most famous worshippers and he was from those who stood up against al-Hajjaaj. It is said that he was killed on the day of *Jumaajinn*. *As-Sceer* (4/371)

HOW THE SALAAH IS PERFORMED

Ibn 'Abbaas *radbiallaahu 'anhu* said that the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

"O 'Abbaas, O Uncle. Should I not grant you? Should I not bestow upon you? Should I not award you? Should I not do with you? Ten things if you were to do them, Allaah would forgive you of your sins, its first and its last, its old and its new, whether it is done intentionally or mistakenly, its small or large, hidden or open.

The ten things:

That you pray the four rakaabs,
reading in every rakaab soorah al-Faatibah and another soorah
and when you have finished reading in the first rakaab then you say while standing,

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَالْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

'How Perfect is Allaah and All Praise belongs to Allaah and there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah and Allaah is the Greatest,' fifteen times
and then bow into ruku and say the same whilst bowing, ten times

and then raise your head from bowing and say it ten times
and then go down into prostration and say it while in prostration ten times
and then you raise your head from prostration and say it ten times

*and then you go down into prostration and say it ten times
and then raise your head from prostration and say it ten
times.*

*So that is seventy-five times in every rakaah and you do that
in each of the four rakaahs. So if your sins were equal to the
froth on the sea or sand of 'Aulij' ¹⁶³ Allaah will forgive it for
you.*

If you are able to pray it every day then do so.

*And if you are not able to do so, then once every Jumu'ah
(Friday).*

And if you are not able to, then once every month.

And if you are not able to, then once a year.

And if you are not able to, then once in your life-time." ¹⁶⁴

So, is there somebody who wants to make this connection with his
Lord?

Is there anyone who wants to clean himself of his sins?

Is there anyone distressed, so it (the prayer) relieves him from his
grief, by the permission of his Lord?

Verily, it is a bathing for one who intends to cleanse himself, and
purifies he who desires purification.

It is a lesson from the lessons of patience and a favour from the Kind
and the Generous and a guidance from the merciful Messenger (ﷺ), a
favour from the Lord and a present from the Beloved.

So will you refuse the King's favour?

¹⁶³ The name of a very sandy place (See *an-Niyaah fee Gharab al-Hadeeth wal-
Ahaadith*) [Publishers]

¹⁶⁴ Abou Dawood Eng. Trans. Vol. 1 No. 1292, ibn Maajah and others. And a
full explanation of this narration's authenticity will come later

And return the present of the Beloved?

So what is the matter with us that we turn away from it?

Lazy in its performance.

While the Generous forgives by it all of the sins, its first and its last,
its old and its new, its small and its big, whether done intentionally or
mistakenly.

So is there any bounty after this bounty?

Is there any generosity after this generosity?

So embark upon it with fervour and enter into the Mercy of the
Gracious by it.

So the resolute ones who seek nearness do not fail to do it once every
day.

While the worshippers, good doers, do not fail to do it once a week.

And the God-conscious believers do not fail to do it once a month.

So do not let *shaytaan* deceive you away from it by the world and by
your saying, 'I shall soon do it' thereby putting it off. For there is
nothing more destructive to mankind than this – your saying, 'I shall
do so (later), I shall do so (later)', while time passes by and days are
spent, his youth expires and he becomes old and feeble and he still
says, 'I shall do so (later), I shall do so (later).'

Let not those people who make (the *ba'deeth*) weak, prevent you
from it, for verily it is reported from eleven Companions and more
than thirty Imaams have authenticated it and many of our Pious
Predecessors have acted upon it.

RULINGS CONCERNING SALAAT-UT-TASBEEH

I followed up the sayings of the People of Knowledge with regard to some of its rulings and their proofs – for example;

Does it have a favoured time?

Does it have a particular reading from the Qur'aan?

Is it prayed in two sets of two, or four joined?

Does it have a particular *du'aa* which one makes after the sitting?

And other such rulings.

So I say, I followed up all of that and I did not find from them anything, except the opinions of individuals – there being no proof from the Book or the *Sunnah*.

Therefore I say, that this *Salaah* should be prayed as four *raka'ahs* connected with one *tasbeeh*, according to what is reported in the text of the *hadith* and in every *raka'ah*, seventy-five *tasbeehat*.

It has no particular or favoured time, nor a particular reading. Rather, he reads whatever is easy for him and it is prayed at any time.

If he forgets the number of *tasbeehat*, so it is said that he should repeat that part of the prayer with its *tasbeehat* and it is said that he should repeat the *raka'ah* altogether and it is said that he should prostrate for forgetfulness and then in his prostration make *tasbeeh* of Allaah in accordance with the number of *tasbeehat* which he forgot. And perhaps the last opinion is the nearest to the truth, and Allaah knows best.

THE EXCELLENCE OF DHIKR (REMEMBRANCE OF ALLAAH) AND TASBEEH ASIDE FROM SALAAH

Verily the Remembrance of Allaah has a far-reaching effect in the education of the Muslim and his purification. It purifies the soul from *dhm* and silences his tongue from indecency and it beautifies his character and polishes the heart of its rust and removes its anxiety and its grief and banishes his worries

It is the nourishment of the heart and the strength of the soul and its cure from all of the physical illnesses and mental diseases.

By it, one overcomes one's anxieties and strengthens one's resolve and is victorious over one's enemies.

It is a nearness to *Ar-Rahmaan* and a dispeller of the whispers of *shaytan*.

Allaah diminishes with it the mistakes and removes calamities with it.

Not to say what the individual receives from the great reward and the most appropriate fulfilment.

Allaah – the Most High – says:

أَلَا بِذِكْرِ اللَّهِ تَطْمَئِنُّ الْقُلُوبُ

"Verily in the Remembrance of Allaah do hearts find tranquillity."⁽¹⁾

(1) Soorah al-Ra'd 13:28

and

وَالذَّاكِرِينَ اللَّهَ كَثِيرًا وَالذَّاكِرَاتِ أَعَدَّ اللَّهُ لَهُمْ مَغْفِرَةً وَأَجْرًا عَظِيمًا

"The men and the women who remember Allaah much (with their hearts and tongues), Allaah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward."¹⁶⁶

The Prophet (ﷺ) said:

"Shall I not inform you concerning the best of your actions and the most pure in the sight of your Master, and causes you to raise in ranks the most, and it is better for you than spending gold and money, and it is better for you than you meeting your enemy – so you strike their necks and they strike your necks?" They said: "Certainly." He (ﷺ) said: "The remembrance of Allaah."¹⁶⁷

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

"Is one of you unable to earn a thousand rewards every day? If he glorifies Allaah a hundred times, Allaah writes for him a thousand good deeds and removes from him a thousand sins because of it."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁶ Soorah al-Ahzab 33:35

¹⁶⁷ Saheeh al-Jaami' no. 2629

¹⁶⁸ Saheeh Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol. 4 No. 6517

The Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

إِنَّ الْحَمْدَ لِلَّهِ ، سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ ، وَلَا إِلَهَ إِلَّا اللَّهُ وَاللَّهُ أَكْبَرُ

"Verily All Praise is due to Allaah, bow Perfect Allaah is, there is no deity worthy of worship except Allaah and Allaah is the Greatest (causes the sins of a servant to fall just as the leaves of this tree fall.)"

And in another narration,

"... sheds the sins just as a tree sheds her leaves."¹⁶⁹

And the Messenger of Allaah (ﷺ) said:

سُبْحَانَ اللَّهِ وَيَحْمَدُهُ

"Whoever says one hundred times in the morning and one hundred times in the evening, 'Glory be to Allaah and praise be to Him', his sins will be forgiven even if they are greater than the foam on the sea."¹⁷⁰

I say, if this is the excellence of *dhikr* (remembrance of Allaah) and *at-tasbeeh* outside of the *Salaah* so how will it be if it is combined with the *Salaah*?

Verily, it is a gathering of light upon light and reward upon reward. For this reason, *Salaat-ut-Tasbeeh* has this great position and plentiful reward.

¹⁶⁹ Saheeh al-Jaami' no.160

¹⁷⁰ Saheeh at-targheeb wa at-tarbeeh

ITS PROOF (OF AUTHENTICITY)

Salaat-ul-Tasbeeh has been narrated from more than ten Companions *radhiyallaahu 'anhum ajma'een*. And here we will just mention three of its chains of narration.

*Firstly the *hadeeth* of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Abbaas *radhiyallaahu 'anhu*.

It is narrated from him in many chains, the most important of which are:

What is narrated by Aboo Dawood no.1297 (Eng. Trans. Vol.1/1292) and ibn Maajah no.1387 and al-Haakim 1/308 and others, by the chain of narration of Musaa ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez, from al-Hakam ibn Abbaan, from 'Iqrimah, from ibn 'Abbaas and this chain of narration is *hasan* (reliable).

As for Musaa ibn 'Abdul 'Azeez then Ibn Ma'een declared him to be trustworthy and an-Nasaa'ee said, 'There is nothing wrong with him.' He has been spoken (badly) about, but without any proof.

While al-Hakam ibn Abbaan: The majority of the scholars have agreed upon him being trustworthy, from amongst them the outstanding Imaams: ibn Ma'een and ibn al-Madeenee and Ahmad ibn Hanbal and they in themselves are enough for you.

'Iqrimah: He is the famous, trustworthy, well-known *Tabi'ee* and he was the slave of ibn 'Abbaas.

*Secondly, the *hadeeth* of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr ibn al-'Aas *radhiyallaahu 'anhu*.

The *hadeeth* of 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr has been reported through different narrations all having Abee al-Jowzaa'ee within the chain.

The first is from Muslim ibn Ibraaheem, from al-Mustamir ibn ar-Rayyaan, from Abee Jowzaa'ee, from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, this is collected by Aboo Dawood (2/30) (Eng. Trans. Vol.1/1293). Its narrators are all by consensus trustworthy and just.

The second is from Muhammad ibn Sufyaan, from Hibbaan ibn Hilaal from Mahdi ibn Maymoon from 'Amr ibn Maalik from Aboo Jowzaa'ee, from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Umar to the Prophet (ﷺ).

This is collected by Aboo Dawood (2/30) (Eng. Trans. Vol.1/1293) and al-Baihaque (3/25). The narrators in this chain of narrations are all *thiqaat* (trustworthy) except for Muhammad ibn Sufyaan who is a truthful person (*sadooq*).

*Thirdly, the *hadeeth* of Ansaaree.

This is collected by Aboo Dawood (1299) (Eng. Trans. Vol.1/1294) and also by al-Baihaque (3/25).

Aboo Tawbah said: Muhammad ibn Muhaajir narrated to us, who said that 'Urwah ibn Raweem said that al-Ansaaree narrated to me – and then he mentions the *hadeeth*.

The narrators in this chain of narration are the narrators used by al-Bukhaaree and Muslim with the exception of 'Urwah, who is trustworthy. And al-Ansaaree is a Companion. Therefore, this chain is *Sabeeh* (authentic) and the two narrations which precede it from 'Abdullaah ibn 'Amr, then one of them is *Sabeeh* (authentic) and the other is *hasan* (reliable).

The aforementioned *hadeeth* of ibn 'Abbaas is at its very least, *hasan* (reliable).

So one can use any of these three chains of narration as a proof – even if it was the only narration about this *Salaah*; so how is it when there are more than ten different chains of narration reported?

I am still astonished after all of this at those who declare this *Salaah* to be *da'eef* (weak) – from amongst those who have not researched this issue thoroughly, not followed up all of its chains of narration but sufficed themselves by imitation of those who declared it weak, despite the fact that the vast majority and the most knowledgeable of the Imaams of *hadeeth* and *fiqh* have declared it authentic and many of the Imaams of *Islam* performed it.

So amongst those who performed it; Aboo al-Jowzaa'ee and he is a well-known *tabi'ee* and worshipper, the great Imaam and *mujtahid* 'Abdullaah ibn al-Mubaarak and other than them.

Amongst those who declared it *sabeeh* or *hasan* are: Ahmad ibn Hanbal, Aboo Dawood, al-Haakim, Aboo Musaa al-Madeenei, al-Khateeb al-Baghdaadee, ibn as-Salaah, al-Baghawee, al-Mundhiri, an-Nawawee in *Tahtheeb al-Asmaa wal-Lughat* and *Al-Adhkaar*, ibn Hajar al-Asqalaanee, as-Suyootee and lastly, the *Mubaddiith* of our time Shaykh al-Albaanee – may Allaah grant them all forgiveness.

The claim of some of them, that this is against the common appearance of *Salaah*, is an incorrect claim after one pays consideration – for it is complete like the other *Salaahs* but it contains an increase in *tasbeeh* and *tahmeed*, and verily, the Prophet (ﷺ) said concerning *Salaah*: "Verily it is for *at-Tasbeeh* and *at-Takbeer*."¹⁷¹

¹⁷¹ Muslim Eng. Trans. Vol.1 No.1094 (in a long *hadeeth*)

So what is disagreeable about its appearance!!!? And whoever wishes further elaboration, then he should refer to the origin¹⁷² in which I explained clearly its position and I also refuted the doubts concerning it – and Allaah is the granter of all good – O Allaah, send your peace and blessings upon Muhammad (ﷺ) his Family and his Companions.

¹⁷² The author then establishes the authenticity of the *hadeeth* on this prayer, refuting and explaining the doubts of those who declared it to be weak. This has been omitted due to its nature and the detailed knowledge of the science of *hadeeth* that it would require and its complexity. However the above short authentication is sufficient and pertinent to this book and the English reading audience [Publishers Note]

Glossary of Terms

- Adhaan:** The call to the five daily prayers. Its wording is fixed and cannot be altered.
- Ameer:** A leader of a nation or a group of individuals who are on a journey or on *Jihaad*.
- 'Asr:** The prayer that is performed in the afternoon it is also known as the middle prayer.
- Bid'ah:** A newly invented matter introduced into the religion of Islaam, having no root or basis in it. Although the act may seem to resemble the way of Islaam in reality it opposes the guidelines of Islaam.
- Du'aa:** Supplication. The name for a great act of worship which involves invoking, beseeching, asking aid and supplicating to Allaah.
- 'Ebaadah:** All actions and sayings – inner or outer – that is loved and liked by Allaah.
- Eemaan:** The belief in Allaah, his Angels, his Books, messengers, the day of Judgement, in pre-estimation (*Qadar*) that is firm in the hearts, uttered on the tongue and acted out by the limbs.
- Fajr:** The first prayer of the day it is known as the dawn prayer because it is performed at dawn.
- Fiqh:** Literally it means Understanding. However it is also the name given to the field of understanding the rules and regulations of Islaam.
- Hadeeth (Pl. Ahaadeeth):** The actions, sayings, characteristics and the tacit approval of the Prophet.
- Haafidh:** A title given to a scholar engaged in the science of *hadeeth*.
- Hasan:** The grading of a *hadeeth* to be reliable but not as strong as a *hadeeth* that is authentic.
- Ijtihaad:** The striving of a scholar to extract a ruling which is based on sources and evidences from the Book of Allaah and the *Sunnah* of the Messenger and consensus of the Muslim scholars.

Imaam (Pl. A'immah): A leader, whether in prayer or of a nation or a leader in knowledge and understanding.

Iqaamah: The call after the *Adhaan* announcing that the prayer will begin.

Jaahiliyah: The name given to the era before the prophecy of Muhammed, the messenger of Allaah. It is also used to refer to instances and situations of ignorance that contradict Islaam.

Makruh: The later generation of scholars used it to mean that which is disliked but the person doing it is not sinful. However the early generation of scholars used it to mean that which is forbidden.

Masjid: A place of prostration, but it refers specifically to the place where the congregational prayer is held.

Mubahh: That which is permissible to do or to abstain from doing.

Mustahabb: That which is liked and preferred but the leaving of it is not sinful.

Qadar: *Qadr* is the pre-knowledge and decree of Allaah for matters that exist according to His prevailing knowledge of what will occur, and that which is necessitated by His wisdom.

Rakah: The section of a prayer that consist of reciting opening chapter once and then another part of the Qur'aan and then *ruku* and prostration.

Ruku: The bowing into the position where one's back is straight and one's hands are placed upon one's knees.

Saheeh: The grading of a *hadeeth* to be authentic.

Salaam: The greetings of one Muslim to another by saying the words *As-salaam alaikum wa rahamt-ul-Allaah* (peace and the mercy of Allaah be upon you).

Shar'iah: The laws and regulations of Islaam, it incorporates all aspects, the beliefs, the manners and the etiquettes and the laws of what is permissible and what is forbidden.

Shaykh: A title given to a person of knowledge.

Shaytaan (Pl. shayaateen): The name given to the devil and when used in the plural it includes all that act in his ways and manners and thus invite to what he stands for.

Shirk: Equating other than Allaah equal to Allaah in that which is particular to Allaah.

Soorah: A chapter of the Qur'aan. The Qur'aan has 114 Soorahs. The first is Soorah al-Faatihah and the last is soorah an-Naas.

Sunnah: A way of conduct whether good or bad. However it has a specific meaning which refers to the way of the messenger of Allaah and is also commonly used as a synonymous term for the word *hadeeth*.

Tabi'ee (Pl. Taabi'oos): A person who met the companions of the Messenger of Allaah.

Tahmeed: The saying of All praise belongs to Allaah.

Takbeer: The saying of Allaah is the greatest.

Tasbeeh: The saying of How perfect Allaah is, free of all defects and deficiencies.

Tawaakul: Dependence upon Allaah without striving to attain the prescribed means to reach the objectives, however this then contradicts the true way to dependence on Allaah and the reliance upon Him.

Tawbah: The turning to Allaah in repentance and asking for forgiveness.

Tawheed: Singling out Allaah for all that which particular to Him, from his Names and Attributes, His Lordship and His worship.

Walee (Pl. Awaliya): The friends of Allaah, and this when used generally applies to all the believers.

Witr: Literally it means that which is an odd number. However it is normally used for a prayer that is of an odd number of Rakahs that is performed as the last prayer.

Wudoo: The purification by washing specific limbs in a specific way and number of times.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

So, that which is between your hands, my Muslim brother, is an explanation of three great blessed prayers, which have been abandoned by the Muslims, except for those whom Allah has shown mercy towards.

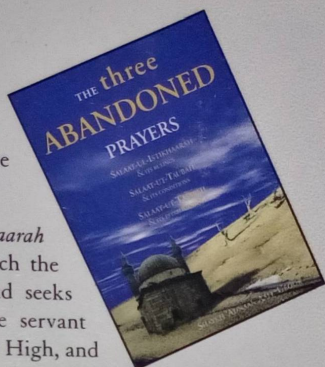
As for the first, then it is *Salaat-ul-Istikhaarah* (the Prayer for Seeking Guidance) in which the servant seeks guidance from his Lord and seeks the counsel of his Creator and by it the servant actualises his servitude to Allaah – the Most High, and it is built upon the truthfulness of his certainty and his assurance in his Lord.

So, what a spiritually immense prayer it is, endowing the Muslim with tranquility and restfulness, increasing his *emaan* (faith) with *eemaan*, by the penetrating power of Allaah, and His powerful Will, not to speak of it bestowing constancy, satisfaction and submission to the Decree of *Al-Jabbaar* (The Compeller). So how great a prayer is it, how splendid a worship it is.

As for the second, then it is *Salaat-ul-Tawbah* (The Prayer of Repentance) by which Allaah wipes away the mistakes and sins; and who from amongst us does not sin, and who from amongst us does not make mistakes?

As for the third, then it is *Salaat-ul-Tasbeeh* and it is also known as *Salaat-ul-Ghufraan* (the Prayer of Forgiveness), or *Salaat-ul-Takfeer* (The Prayer of Expiation) or *Salaat-ul-Tawbah* (The Prayer of Repentance) or *Salaat-ul-Inaabah* (the Prayer of Atonement). It encompasses all of these meanings, so race towards the harvest of these ripe fruits for verily it has become a prayer completely forgotten and abandoned. So avail your youth before you reach old age, and your health before sickness, before you regret on the day that regret will be of no avail.

[From the introduction]



PUBLISHERS

HARRAF & HARRAF

TELEPHONE: 020 8801 8001 • FACSIMILE: 020 8885 0060